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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF WILLIAM MORRIS

WITH INTRODUCTIONS BY
HIS DAUGHTER MAY MORRIS

VOLUME XXII
HOPES AND FEARS FOR ART
LECTURES ON ART AND INDUSTRY

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INTRODUCTION

IT may be of interest to gather in this place a few notes about my father's favourite reading-books. It was at the end of 1885, following on a lecture of Sir John Lubbock's at the Working Men's College, that the "Pall Mall Gazette" printed his provisional list of the Best Hundred Books. It will be remembered that this was sent round to people of note whose remarks and emendations were subsequently published in the paper. I have before me these suggested lists of two men of letters, and the original list as amended by a third: Ruskin, Swinburne and Morris. It is curiously amusing to note how differently they treated Mr. Stead's request. Swinburne conscientiously puts down his hundred volumes, accompanied by a modest and sedate letter of explanation. Ruskin, as it were, empties his inkpot over those names on the original list which are obnoxious to him, adding a brief letter to the effect that he is putting his pen "lightly through the needless, and blottesquely through the poison and rubbish of Sir John's list." Morris writes down the names of fifty-four works and makes his own classification of them; it is characteristic that instead of eking out his number to the hundred he leaves the list at that. They are part of the material of his life—the very friends of his life; he cannot leave the list without a comment on each group, fully significant of what the works mean to him.

A glance at the titles of the books admitted to their privacy, or rejected, brings out *en passant* the points of contact and of diversity in these three friends and contemporaries, so diverse in their nature and their way of meeting life. They are of course unanimous on certain classics; but Ruskin crosses out the Nibelungenlied and Mallory's Morte d'Arthur; he also declines all Eastern poetry and thought (Mahabharata, Shahnameh, etc.). Swinburne overlooks (or rejects) Plato and Hesiod; also Plutarch's Lives, also Carlyle. He alone of them will have Thackeray among his

friends, or George Eliot (the former lightly, the latter severely crossed out on Ruskin's list). Ruskin will have none of Darwin's Voyage of the Beagle (Darwin would of course be in every way outside the scope of Morris's list) because "it is every man's duty to know what he *is*, and not to think of the embryo he was, nor the skeleton that he shall be."

My father wrote to the Pall Mall Gazette:

Sir

I answer your letter with much pleasure. Like my friend Mr. Swinburne, I do not pretend to prescribe reading for other people: the list I give you is of books which have profoundly impressed myself: I hope I shall be acquitted of egotism or conceit for having ventured to add a few notes to the list; in some cases I felt explanation was necessary; in all, it seemed to me that my opinion could be of no value unless it were given quite frankly; so I ask your readers to accept my list and notes as a confession such as might chance to fall from me in friendly conversation; and, after all, these are matters about which one must have an opinion, though it may, I feel too well, be sometimes prudent to conceal it.

My list seems a short one, but it includes a huge mass of reading. Also there is a kind of book which I think might be excluded in such lists, or at least put in a quite separate one. Such books are rather tools than books; one reads them for a definite purpose, for extracting information from them of some special kind. Among such books I should include works on philosophy, economics, and modern or critical history. I by no means intend to undervalue such books, but they are not, to my mind, works of art; their manner may be good, or even excellent, but it is not essential to them; their matter is a question of fact, not of taste. My list comprises only what I consider works of art.

I am, Sir,
Yours obediently
WILLIAM MORRIS.

1. Hebrew Bible (excluding some twice done parts and some pieces of mere Jewish ecclesiasticism).
2. Homer.
3. Hesiod.
4. The Edda (including some of the other early old Norse romantic genealogical poems).
5. Beowulf.
6. Kalevala, Shahnameh, Mahabharata.
7. Collections of folk tales, headed by Grimm and the Norse ones.
8. Irish and Welsh traditional poems.

These are the kind of book which Mazzini called "Bibles"; they cannot always be measured by a literary standard, but to me are far more important than any literature. They are in no sense the work of individuals, but have grown up from the very hearts of the *people*.

Some other books further down share in the nature of these "Bibles." I have marked them with a star.*

* 9. Herodotus.
10. Plato.
11. Æschylus.
12. Sophocles.
13. Aristophanes.
14. Theocritus.
15. Lucretius.
16. Catullus.

Real ancient imaginative works. I have left out others of which (to confess and be hanged) I know little or nothing. The greater part of the Latins I should call *sham* classics. I suppose that they have some good literary qualities; but I cannot help thinking that it is difficult to find out how much. I suspect superstition and authority have influenced our estimate of them till it has become a mere matter of convention. Of course I admit the archæological value of some of them, especially Virgil and Ovid.

17. Plutarch's Lives.
*18. Heimskringla (the tales of the Norse Kings).
*19. Some half-dozen of the best Icelandic Sagas.
20. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.
21. William of Malmesbury.
22. Froissart.

Uncritical or traditional history: almost all these books are admirable pieces of tale-telling: some of them rise into the dignity of prose epics, so to say, especially in parts. Note, for instance, the last battle of Olaf Tryggvason in Heimskringla; and the great rally of the rebels of Ghent in Froissart.

23. Anglo-Saxon lyrical pieces (like the Ruin and the Exile).
24. Dante.
25. Chaucer.
26. Piers Plowman.
*27. Nibelungennot
*28. The Danish and Scotch
29. English Border ballads.
30. Omar Khayyám (though I don't know how much of the charm of this lovely poem is due to Fitz-Gerald, the translator).
31. Other Arab and Persian poetry.
32. Renard the Fox.
33. A few of the best rhymed romances.

Mediaeval poetry. I am sorry to say that I can only read even *old* German with great difficulty and labour; so I miss much good mediaeval poetry—Hans Sachs, for instance.

*34. The Morte d'Arthur (Mallory's). I know this is an ill-digested collection of fragments, but some of the best of the books it is made from (Lancelot is the best of them) are so long and so cumbered with unnecessary matter that one is thankful to Mallory after all. *35. The Thousand and One Nights. 36. Boccaccio's Decameron. 37. The Mabinogion.	Mediaeval story-books.
38. Shakespeare. 39. Blake (the part of him which a mortal can understand) 40. Coleridge. 41. Shelley. 42. Keats. 43. Byron.	Modern poets. I omit those of this generation whether dead or alive. Goethe and Heine I cannot read, since I don't know German and they cannot be translated. I hope I shall escape Boycotting at the hands of my countrymen for leaving out Milton; but the union in his works of cold classicalism with Puritanism (the two things which I hate most in the world) repels me so that I *cannot* read him.

44. Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.
45. Defoe: Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders, Colonel Jack, Captain Singleton, Voyage round the World.
46. Scott's Novels (except the one or two which he wrote when he was hardly alive).
47. Dumas the elder (his good novels).
48. Victor Hugo (his novels).
49. Dickens.
50. George Borrow (Lavengro and Romany Rye).

Modern fiction. I should like to say here that I yield to no one, not even Ruskin, in my love and admiration for Scott; also that to my mind of the novelists of our generation Dickens is immeasurably ahead.

51. Sir Thomas More's Utopia.
52. Ruskin's Works (especially the ethical and politico-economical parts of them).
53. Thomas Carlyle's Works

I don't know how to class these works.

54. Grimm's Teutonic Mythology.

Though this last book is of the nature of the "tools" above-mentioned, it is so crammed with the material for imagination, and has in itself such a flavour of imagination, that I feel bound to put it down.

I should note that I have by no means intended to put down these books in their order of merit or importance, even in their own divisions.

It will be seen that just a few "play-books" are admitted to this honourable list of life-long companions. There were many books that we shared in common with him, which he read to us in snatches, or from end to end, as it happened, and of them, those we came to know almost by heart at certain choice passages were not the least beloved or welcomed.

I think perhaps there were no happier hours of our home-evenings than when, the winter wind tearing among the elms outside, we were gathered together round the great fire-place, Father reading aloud one of the family classics. We were presented with nothing harassing or ostensibly improving; it was all pure enjoyment, but no sleepy-hollow of vague harmonies, be sure. Our minds had to be on the alert to meet our varied and motley throng of friends those happy evenings, to follow their fortunes in the Highlands of Scotland, in the London slums, or over-sea in the golden East. It was all very human and catholic, and very stimulating. We have many times been through the whole of Scott's novels this way (except the two or three unreadable ones), the most of Dickens, the most of Lane's Thousand and One Nights. Less often but with great pleasure, Borrow's Lavengro and Romany Rye, a good deal of Cobbett's strenuous pronouncements, many favourite passages out of the Icelandic Sagas. Certain portions of Handley Cross were known by heart, though most of Surtees' other works were considered too low for family consumption. But the little Cockney grocer with a passion for "'unting" was a firm and familiar friend in the poet's household. It may sound grotesque to say it, but after all these years, a casual mention of Mr. Jorrocks' lecture on 'Unting calls up, in a sudden pang of memory, a picture of autumn evenings round the hearth of the Tapestry Room at Kelmscott—beautiful harmonious times evoked out of the clouds by a truly incongruous enchanter.

Chandler Harris's "Nights with Uncle Remus" soon took its place among us, and there is a certain ghost-story in one of the volumes, told by the negro African Jack, that

Father used to read impressively and dramatically, so that when the crisis came, one was positively stiff with excitement, and the pursuing horror of a corpse seemed to be actually wavering on the threshold of the room. Another of the African stories (which he admired greatly, thinking them more poetic than the fascinating drolleries of Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox) was that of the "little girl." There was something in this tale that touched him specially, and he would read it to us in such a way that I truly think the melody and charm of it grew with every repetition. He read it also in the little meeting-hall at one of our Hammersmith Socialist Society's annual parties. * The same evening he gave us John Ball's Sermon—of which reading it is not too much to say that it might well wipe out remembrance of any other happening on that day, so wonderful it was to hear reality given to the words of the hedge-priest: he stood before us there with his stinging passionate appeal and prophecy—no dream for the moment.

Sometimes my father would bring out a volume of Holland's Pliny and give us sundry stimulating information from that storehouse of romantic lore in the stately language of the Elizabethan gentleman. Or it would be a dramatic scene from Lord Berners' Froissart, from whose pages we learnt much of the colour and movement of Anglo-French life in the fourteenth century. But perhaps the most popular of our more weighty encyclopædic classics—the books into which one burrows happily year after year—was that of the diligent master John Gerard, the pages of whose Herbal my father would turn, reading descriptions, now beautiful, now quaint, of favourite plants, and when not too nauseous, the uses of them and their virtues. We learnt to know old Gerard well;

*W.M. finished the first vine-border for the Chaucer.
Party of the Soc. Society at K.H. in the evening.
W.M. read the Shooting Party from Pickwick and afterwards the Burghers' Battle from Poems by the Way, and John Ball's Sermon most impressively. Diary of S.C.C. Feb. 11, 1893.

it was a link of friendship to meet certain uncommon plants that flourished at Kelmscott in his London garden—surely a delightful place. We loved his meditative notes, of such a herb, "I planted it in my garden," of such another "this groweth well by the pump in Leather Lane"; we heard with sympathy how he received a rare plant from the French King's Herbalist "dwelling in Paris at the signe of the blacke head, in the street called Du bout du monde, in English, The end of the World," or how he went on a simpling ramble with Mr. John Bugs, &c. &c. All such gentle gossip from London of the sixteenth century was pleasant reading; and while such flower-titles as "the red Lilly of Constantinople," "Moly or the Sorcerer's Garlicke," "the checquered Daffodil or Ginnyhen floure"* seemed wonderfully in harmony with the poet's own imagery, we girls revelled in master John's amiable chat of how a certain wild rose "groweth in a pasture as you go from a village hard by London called Knights Bridge, unto Fulham . . . ," and in the unconscious humour of such gentle babble as "I found it in the next field unto Boobies barn under that hedge that bordereth upon the lane . . ." &c. &c. which made one feel a little out of it for not recognizing the locality so carefully described somewhere near Hampstead which is somewhere near London.

Why have I left our friends Huck Finn, Tom Sawyer and Miss Watson's Jim till the last? "If you want a good grin get hold of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain: you will be more or less than human if it does not make you roll about with laughter," says a letter to Mother in 1885.

One of my father's antipathies was what the book-lists call "American Humour," while the pathos of the backwoods made him feel almost murderous. Sometimes at our Socialist gatherings a comrade of histrionic talent would recite a poem of Bret Harte's with emotion vibrating in his voice; and at such moments Comrade Morris's agony and the

* Our Thames-side fritillary, for which master John has a pretty and loving description.

friendly attempt to hide it was a sight to make one suffer sympathetically. A guileless literary lady once asked him, in her surprise at his want of admiration for this type of literature, "But surely you feel touched by 'The Luck of Roaring Camp'?" He answered her with an ominous politeness and a suppressed fury that she neither understood nor felt the danger of. The storm passed and the only one who trembled was the onlooker accustomed to read the weather-signs.

Huck Finn was enjoyed for something beyond the inimitable fun and the exhilarating sense of free air about it, and when our poet spoke seriously of the literary art in these stories and in the Mississippi Pilot, we thought we understood what the quality was that touched his sympathy, and we noted with amusement the gasp of surprise with which certain friends (whom we thought might also have understood) received the dictum. But they were the people, we remembered, who "didn't like onions," and who mourned periodically over our deplorable intimacy with Jorrocks. The incident of whitewashing the fence and Tom Sawyer's astute device in deputing his labour, so that his neighbours ended by struggling for the privilege of working for him, our poet in moments of naughty exaggeration declared to be worthy of Odysseus. More than once he read it aloud at a Socialist concert as a "little lesson in economics"—to our pure joy, for our studies in Socialism were solemn to distraction and needed some lightening.

One of our great possessions, Dumas (there existed only one Dumas for us) was not read aloud. There was no style about the translations, which were often bad, and though my father read French easily, he was not a born linguist, and would have found no relaxation in reading to a perhaps critical family in "that nosey Latin" which he so lamented for the amiable French nation. But we all read the best of Dumas' romances to ourselves, and compared notes when we came together; quoted Chicot and rejoiced over Gorenflot's feasting; laughed with D'Artagnan, sulked with Athos, strutted with Porthos, entered into the least adventures of

our heroes with keen zest . . . surely, could he have seen it, the heart of the old viveur and romancist would have warmed a little to think of the pastime he had provided for the intimate hours of a virtuous and unworldly family of the English middle-class.

Many times our poet said he could never forgive Dickens for dying before he had finished Edwin Drood. We used to have endless fireside discussions over the Mystery, each one bringing a different solution, to which objections were raised and argued out—all in vain . . .

Like all fine readers my father did not enjoy being read to in the family, and when he was ill and could not read, and we were longing to be able to amuse him, it became truly difficult, for the reader's consciousness that she was so inferior and unendurable made her nervous and sensitive to a barely visible symptom of boredom or impatience. On one such occasion I tried French reading, by request—a visit to Paris to a Socialist Congress was before him and he thought to air his French. What a reading! what a choice I made! a bright story by a well-known writer, with no sentiment and plenty of dialogue. A few pages were endured, and then my dear listener, after unmistakable signs of fidget, thanked me kindly and said he really and truly couldn't stand it. And I can see now that there was something in the quality of the author's mind, on top of the "nosey Latin," that was antipathetic to the verge of loathing.

His own reading was superb: much has been said about his "chanting" of poetry, but the rendering of fine prose, or indeed of ordinarily interesting prose, was as remarkable. Gifted with a beautiful voice that needed little drilling, his delivery before an audience was wanting in the ordinary usages of voice-production, and its effect had to depend on a compelling simplicity and intentness, on a certain dramatic intuition and a tremendous force of emphasis at need, all of which served him on the platform in the place of the easy flow of the "born orator." The charm of his intimate reading came from a great sensitiveness to the mood of his author,

which at one moment would call up to a circle of helpless laughter-stifling listeners the antics of Andrew Fairservice in conflict with Baillie Nicol Jarvie, and in the next carry them into the kingdom of pure romance with a measured rhythmic interpretation of Scott's poetical description of wild life in the Macgregor country. Scott was meant for such reading, and through its means one comes to realize the greatness of his art, his sweet uncynical enjoyment of human whimsicalities, the swift invention, the unerring skill in drawing his picture, the poet's touch illuminating all. Calling back some of the good moments of the former life, and remembering the deep contentment, the stimulation of these Scott evenings, to the reader as well as to those who listened, I think with affection and gratitude of the throng of imaginative writers whose thought was so closely interwoven into the stuff of my father's life.

When Maeterlinck came into the picture Father read one or two of the plays, was struck by the slender and delicate charm—and then read no more. It was characteristic of him that he gave up an author when he had made up his mind, as he swiftly did on occasion, that he had no use for him, while so many of us are apt to waste our time in reading on with a lazy hope that we may be amused here and there. Maeterlinck's unexplained mysteries, his vagueness, dissatisfied him: an author should not evade the difficulties of a story; it was as much, he once said, as though a painter presented Helen of Troy with her back turned to the beholder—too easy a device. The Belgian's representation of the Middle Age, too, in an atmosphere of unrelieved gloom and desolation rather bored him. Like other level-headed men of busy life, he never gave way to the "tyranny of taste" in regard to modern literature, though he would often honestly try to like certain classics that dear and intimate friends wanted him to enjoy. Balzac was thus presented to him; but while he recognized the due place of this great writer, he was not able to take him to his intimacy and make an everyday friend of him. If I could but remember some of the dis-

cussions on authors dead and living, so picturesque, so full of vivacity, ever the right word found for them, sometimes in a fantastic garb! Many is the time his family have regretted not having played Boswell to his Johnson; the sayings about books and their writers were, when not perverse out of sheer naughtiness, so racy and so just. I have been trying hard to recall some actual word on Balzac (we were reading him a good deal at one time, and talked about him with Father), but sooner than give a half-impression, must leave it alone.

There was a time when we were all reading Auerbach's tales, and though unqualified approval was not vouchsafed in our house to his long novel "On the Heights," the priggishness of the principal personages was forgiven for the value of certain others of them, for the painting of peasant life out there and the contrasting court-life, the grave snobbery of which was found very entertaining. "Item I have been reading some of Auerbach's *little* tales," he wrote to Mother one time; "have you read 'The Step-mother?' 'tis very dear and pretty, so is another called 'Erdamutter' (I think)."

To continue a string of desultory notes about this desultory reading, we may turn from one of the few examples of recent German literature that he was curious about, to the Russians. "Here I am after my long run to Edinburgh," he writes one autumn; "I amused myself partly with Homer (110 lines) and partly with reading a new book which is very interesting, Russian Epic Songs * to wit." There were but two of the Russians that he read to any extent—Tourguenieff and Tolstoy. For these two great writers who portrayed with stern sincerity the clouded lives of their fellow-countrymen, he had a very dissimilar welcome: he took them into different sections of his mind, and it is not hard to say which of them was allowed to penetrate the furthest. You might say the difference was that he loved Tourguenieff and respected Tolstoy as an artist. With Tourguenieff's handling of his subject; with his outlook, his temperament, I think I

* The Songs of the Russian People. By W. R. S. Ralston.

may say he was far more in sympathy than with Tolstoy. "War and Peace" he pronounced a remarkable book, but I watched his progress through it (myself a volume behind, and all alert for his word on it), and knew that it was not an entirely pleasurable journey. Of "Anna Karenina" he wrote me: "I have very nearly read out 'Anna Karenina'; I think it better than 'War and Peace' as a work of art, but I find it very heavy reading sometimes."

The indiscreet zeal of some of Tolstoy's followers placed him in a rather disadvantageous light those days—in the eyes of some people, among whom my father. I doubt not, that if an authoritative and sober account of Tolstoy's life had been forthcoming before the English poet went to his rest, he might have been more interested in the doings of the Russian preacher.

People were beginning to live a "simple life" over here, too, and he watched their vagaries with amusement, knowing how impossible it is for the sincerest to detach themselves from the complications of modern life, and what it has to offer, good and bad. One day he received with an amused grin the intelligence that a charming young woman we knew had retired to the solitude of the woods in a shift and sandals, to cultivate her soul and straighten her toes. "Let us know when she comes out" was the comment. The latter-day simple-lifers, who spend their time in grinding corn for their bread, and catching rain from the roof for their drinking-water were a little after his day; and he could not foresee the indiscretions to be committed in his own name by muddlers whose antics certainly do not follow the teaching and realize the ideals of the most unaffected man that ever lived.

My father was a rapid as well as an omnivorous reader: it seemed as if books that were taken up but once, whether for pastime or for information, were merely glanced at, the contents of a page grasped in a momentary look. But it really was grasped, and the miraculously retentive memory would, without any special effort, recall the work, subject

and detail, after a lapse of years, though the volume itself might never be opened again. Ruskin's warning against rapid reading is just, but how about the fortunate people who can almost master a book by its smell, and do not need to linger? And fine rhetorical prose was treated deliberately —such as Ruskin's own splendid passage in "The Nature of Gothic" on the comparison of the South and the North which we have heard declaimed in such a way as to make one marvel over the magic of words, that they could conjure up so swiftly, so radiantly, the majestic panorama of the earth.

In this rapid way of surveying a book, so many works were disposed of, that he often came to us complaining that "he had nothing to read," and that if we did not find him something he should be reduced to one of his own poems. And he wrote one day, "Do you know, my dear, I am really out of books, unless I take to one of my sixteenth or seventeenth century folios: I have about done Mommsen (he has thinned me down a good deal) and I am reduced to reading a cookery-book for the present . . . only moderate reading, except when one is really about to get to work in the kitchen."

I have to put down just as they come remembrances about current literature and how it touched him or passed him by, as this can be but a medley of impressions out of the rather later periods. It would be an amusing task to jot down items of the heterogeneous reading, just as they come into one's mind—a Gaboriau story of gilded crime hard on Elton's "Origins of English History," Charles Reade's "Cloister and the Hearth" sandwiched between the Memoirs of Lady Hester Stanhope and snatches of Irish epic, a book of Finnish folk-tales elbowing Rashdall's Universities. Well, the man of mature life who goes through a deliberate course of holiday-reading on given lines would be rather a curiosity, surely? Half the charm lies in the oddness of such pleasant company . . .

I have mentioned tastes but said little about distastes. My father did not often allow antipathetic books to trouble

him, unless as said above people pressed them on his notice. Certainly, Montaigne was "one of the Seven Humbugs of Christendom" (one of these days I am going to read him and find out why), and he disliked the brilliant eighteenth century classics in the lump; but that is understandable—oil and water could more easily mix than his thoughts with theirs, and he would sometimes amuse himself and us by scolding at these folk in unclassic and richly figurative language. But the books that were not for him, unless he were plagued to notice them, he just let go by, without either curiosity or annoyance. For instance, in a letter where he tells of Reynard the Fox being out and how that it is "a *very* jolly book," he adds: "I have been reading 'The Little Minister'; but I left off and couldn't go on. I don't belong to the parish. . . ." It was not dislike of village chronicle, however, that made Barrie difficult reading, for years before, when he came across Galt's "Annals of the Parish," it gave him great pleasure. Charles Kingsley he was inclined in this later time to regard as Ruskin did (though more mildly) disliking the false sentiment and the strained tragedy of him; in the Oxford days, as we know, he was somewhat touched by the Kingsley movement. Of George Eliot he could only read with any great enjoyment the "Scenes from Clerical Life" and "Silas Marner." "Adam Bede" he thought "cruel" and perhaps this irked him the more because he knew that cruelty was no part of the writer's character; a few of Meredith's novels he certainly read, notably "Evan Harrington," but no one who understands his temperament would expect to hear that he was a constant reader of Meredith.

Have I left till so late the mention of Carlyle, the humours of whose great Frederick afforded our poet such constant entertainment? And Gibbon, who, despite of Ruskin's onslaught,* was read through more than once during different bouts of illness and taken up constantly in the last years

* "None but the malignant and the weak study the Decline and Fall either of State or organism," &c.

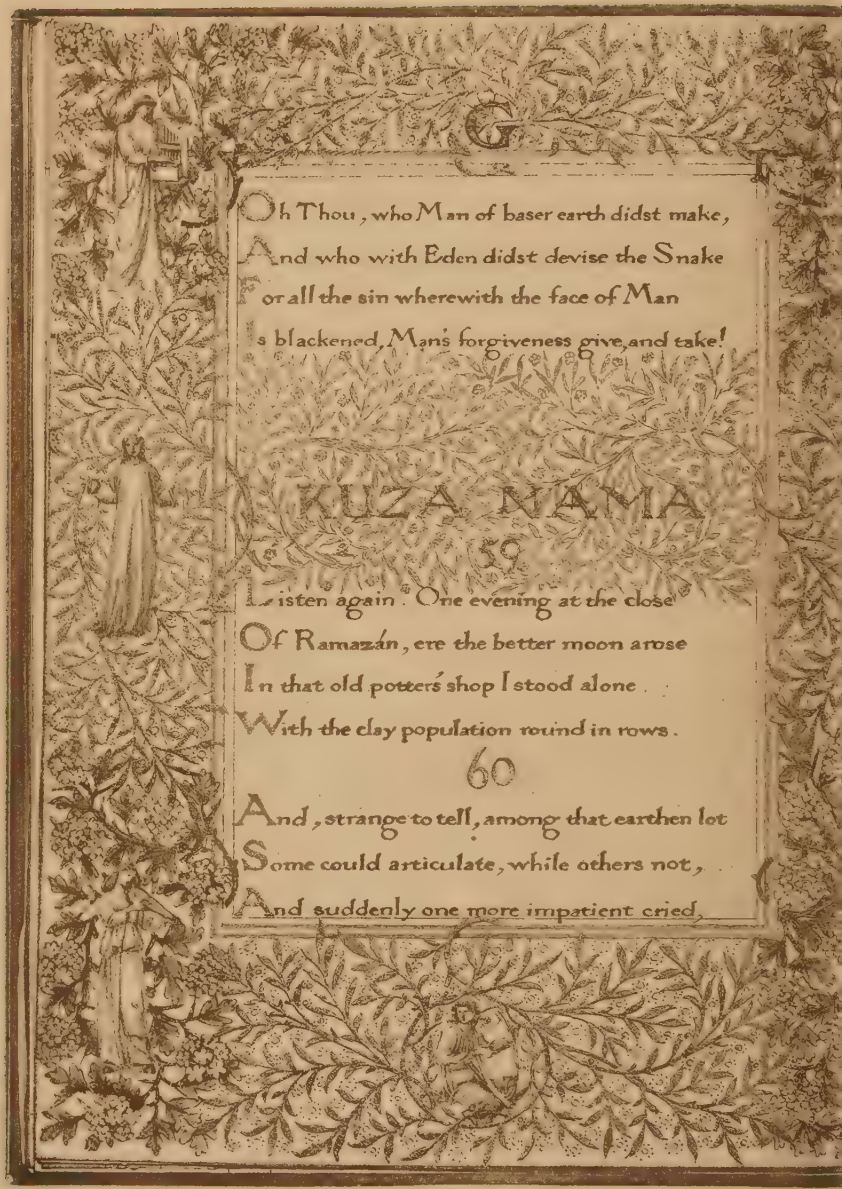
of the life? "So jolly to have a good long book that doesn't come to an end as soon as you've dipped your nose into it," has been said of it. I have mentioned elsewhere his unqualified joy in Doughty's "Arabia Deserta," and that Butler's "Erewhon" was a household word. Other familiar volumes on the shelves were Catlin's "Illustrations of the Manners, Customs and Conditions of the North-American Indians" and "The Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish," of which O'Currie's Introduction and Notes afforded my father much satisfaction. He writes to my sister one year how that he had "lectured on Sunday at the Irish National League rooms in Blackfriars Road: all or most Irish there; and Parnellites to the backbone; but dear me! such quiet respectable people! I was able to please them by assuring them of my sympathy for their views and also by telling them I had read and much admired translations of their ancient literature: one man whom I spoke with afterwards knew all about the old stories and could speak Irish well."

As a form of art my father disliked the modern play, as an amusement it bored him almost (sometimes quite) to swearing-point, and modern acting, with its appeal to the emotions, its elaborate realism and character-study, was intolerable. Shakespeare had done great harm to the drama, he thought, having imposed a certain tradition on the future, which no one after him has been strong enough to get away from. The convention should be much more marked, and people should once again act in masks, to simplify and detach the persons of the drama. Nobody should be killed on the stage, of course, and no sick or dying persons should be presented, and above all, no children "with their nasty squeaking voices." Then he would show us how the actors should represent weeping, dabbing one eye mildly and deliberately with his handkerchief, and then the other—we youngsters looking on, half in laughter, half in vexation that the art of our stage-favourites should thus be implicitly condemned.

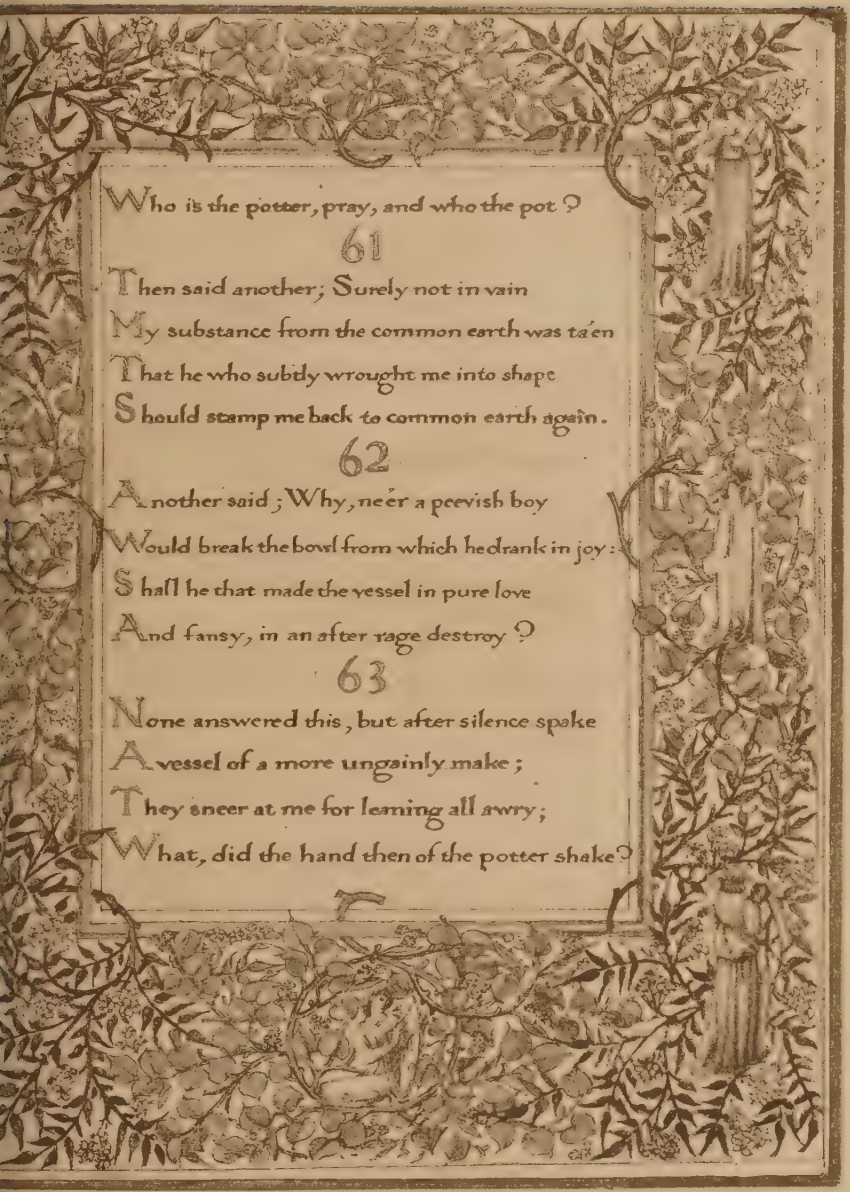
For there was a time when we girls had the play-fever badly—to speak accurately, when I had, for my sister was too sensible—and poor Father would sometimes be plagued into going to a theatre. He suffered so much on these occasions that it was not all pure joy for his companions; how could one be entirely content while conscious that he was, out of sheer good-nature, undergoing alternately mere boredom and active irritation? Our attention would be divided between the stage with its convention of beauty, of sentiment, of action, and the overwhelming personality beside us, who was merely fatigued by the elaborate skill of it all. To him all this convention was pitched in the wrong key—was Dead Sea fruit; he could not for the fraction of a second give himself up to illusion and sympathy so as to form part of the complex strange unit that players and their audience make. Terror as to whether his muttered exclamations could be heard right or left was mingled with a certain high glee over the picturesqueness of this unmanageable playgoer's comments, which were always concise and to the point, and often quite fair.

An ill-advised friend once persuaded us to go to a certain musical comedy, thinking in all good-nature to distract my father who had been somewhat overwhelmed by Socialist anxieties. When the leading lady, a Frenchwoman of dreadful archness, began to get sportive, my father could scarcely contain himself, and muttered in his beard with bent head "damned little pink TOAD," the suppressed force of the last word being such that it might well have shot over the footlights and flattened out the lady. Another artist he commented on through clenched teeth as "a pink pig squealing into a wool-sack," her voice having what I have heard described as a "veiled quality" about it which did not appeal to our restive critic.

My poor father! We made him go to Ibsen performances too, when Ibsen appeared on the horizon. One or two of the plays that he either read or saw acted amused him, and of


Oh Thou, who Man of baser earth didst make,
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake
For all the sin wherewith the face of Man
Is blackened, Man's forgiveness give, and take!
KUZA NAMA
59
Listen again. One evening at the close
Of Ramazán, ere the better moon arose
In that old potter's shop I stood alone
With the clay population round in rows.
60
And, strange to tell, among that earthen lot
Some could articulate, while others not,
And suddenly one more impatient cried,

Pages from FitzGerald's Rubáiyát of Omar K


Who is the potter, pray, and who the pot ?
61
Then said another; Surely not in vain
My substance from the common earth was ta'en
That he who subtly wrought me into shape
Should stamp me back to common earth again.
62
Another said; Why, ne'er a peevish boy
Would break the bowl from which he drank in joy:
Shall he that made the vessel in pure love
And fansy, in an after rage destroy ?
63
None answered this, but after silence spake
A vessel of a more ungainly make;
They sneer at me for leaning all awry;
What, did the hand then of the potter shake?

ám written and illuminated by William Morris

others he admitted the value, but he viewed the stir and current of life around him too sanely and far-sightedly to be ever carried away by a back-eddy, and Ibsen's art (or art-lessness) left him unmoved in the long run.

Ibsen naturally calls up Björnsen, and in passing I will note how highly he spoke of the latter's little story Synnové Synbakken. Something in the quality of it touched him exceedingly when he first read it, and indeed there is a certain kinship between such tales and his own latest romances. The taciturn life in constant struggle with Nature, and a sober rejoicing in her not lightly yielded gifts; the sweetness of the little maid and the shy wooing under difficulties, the "queerness" of some of the minor characters, the grave spaciousness of the Northern mountain-country with its miniature patches of human mirth here and there: you can recognize in all this what it was that appealed to him and was familiar.

To go back for one moment to the drama: with this dislike for the play as formalized since Shakespeare's time, one has to remember that my father's dramatic instinct was as strong as might be. And his power of mimicry was positively fantastic: he acted with his whole body when he wanted to illustrate some point in a story, and the climax was always admirably rendered. An old friend, himself a fine animal-artist and keen student of their ways, recalls how in the early days they were talking about the characteristics of an eagle, and in a moment the young man had climbed into a chair and "did" the eagle brooding in his eerie sulkily ruffling his feathers, most dramatically. We children rejoiced in the humours of a certain raven that on one of the Icelandic journeys came round the men's tent one night and played all sorts of pranks, which were recounted with the queerest and most vivid raven-expression and raven-voice and action. The mimicry of persons was all the more enjoyable for being quite without a spice of malice or cruelty: there was none of the gibe that wounds, the

thought that poisons, in them; it was all sheer fun and enjoyment of the queerness of life. In the young days Rossetti was a great play-goer, and my father used often to go with him; they saw many of the old favourites together, and reminiscences of them afforded material for our amusement later. In this way we have had a glimpse of Macready ("almost the worst actor that ever was") with his terrible "suppressed emotion," a glimpse of the delightful Robson whom my father loved,* and of many others.

I may be allowed here to quote some "Boswell-notes" of Mr. Cockerell's, which need no apology, with their freshness and authenticity of remarks written down at the moment.

They had been having a "splendid talk" about novels and plays... "Disagreeable persons should not be introduced [in the drama], and heroines should always be pretty. History (whatever study he undertook was interesting only or mainly for the light it threw on history); education (he would have Greek and Latin, Sanscrit or Persian, and one modern language, preferably German, taught. French to be learnt from its literature. Properly speaking French and English are not languages, as they have no complete syntax. He would never teach English grammar, unless by a course of philological reading beginning with the literature of the 14th century. Mathematics he rather despised and could never master (he never knew a mathematician who could reason): Politics and Socialism of course, and many other things. This mainly at the tea-table. Looked at some of his books afterwards and at the proof-sheets of 'Poems by the Way' and 'The Golden Legend' which are being printed together at the Kelmscott Press. Saw a number of new designs for letters, including a whole black-letter fount, several capitals in red and blue, and a new border, all superbly done. W.M. read me some passages from a Saga,

* He used to speak of Robson as the best actor he ever saw.

about King Bryan, and then we adjourned to the Socialist meeting, where he read the conversational chapters in 'News from Nowhere.'"

Here also from Mr. Cockerell are some "Notes of a biographical talk by William Morris at Kelmscott House, Nov. 28, 1892 (taken down in the room at the time)." Some of the remarks are already known, but the value of them lies in their direct, documentary form.

"Our clique was much influenced by Keats, who was a poet who represented semblances, as opposed to Shelley who had no eyes, and whose admiration was not critical but conventional. I remember the issue of Tennyson's 'Maud,' and its doubtful reception by the reviewers. I went up to College in 1852. Ruskin's Stones of Venice (vols. 2 and 3) came out in the following year, and made a deep impression. I read Mrs. Browning a good deal at Oxford. She was a great poetess—in some respects she had greater capacity than Browning, though she was a poor rhymer. I refer to the earlier work; Aurora Leigh I consider dull. I pretended to like Wordsworth at that time, and was to some extent touched by the Kingsley movement which, like Puseyism, was a reaction against Puritanism. I never read Byron; even now I have only read Don Juan, the Vision of Judgment, and Cain, which I consider a fine piece. I did not care for Milton; the essence of him was rhetoric, though he was of course a wonderful versifier. Shakespeare did not much attract me, as I have not much sympathy with the dramatic form. I had read all Scott's novels by the time I was seven, and I don't remember the time when I couldn't read. I have read the whole of the Faerie Queene, without being interested in the characters; but it is beautiful verse. We fell under the influence of Rossetti, perhaps I even more than Burne-Jones, and he did us a great deal of good. He was not a happy man, being too self-centred, though very kind, and fair in his judgment of other people. He had no sym-

pathy with Northern things, being an Italian by race. He used to insist on the importance of the dramatic element. Of course Swinburne is by name and race pure Danish, and he was deep sunk in Chaucer and Froissart when first I knew him. Rossetti was immersed in Dante and the like. After the Tennyson period Rossetti introduced me to Browning, who had a great influence on me. I have read Sordello from beginning to end, though I don't remember what it is about. Rossetti's poems, and mine also, are rather of the nature of a series of pictures, and it is difficult to say whether he was greater as poet or painter. I left Street after being with him nine months in order to try painting. I should have painted well so far as the execution is concerned, and I had a good sense of colour; but though I have, so to speak, the literary artistic memory, I have not the artistic artistic memory. I can only draw what I see before me, and my pictures, some of which still exist, lack movement.

"I was greatly taken up with Mallory, Froissart, and anything mediaeval that I could lay my hands on, my interest in history being essentially with mediaeval or artistic times and with the present or revolutionary times out of which one hopes to draw more art in the future. It is impossible to conceive the ugliness of ordinary houses when we set up in business. We opened in Red Lion Square in 1860. I went twice to Iceland, in 1871 and 1873, and have always been deeply stirred by the Northern Sagas, as was Swinburne too. In religion I am a pagan."

The following letter to Mrs. Alfred Baldwin, speaking both of books and drawing, comes in this place.

Queen Square,
October 22nd 1873.

My dear Louie

Georgie says you would like to hear from me from time to time, which makes it a great pleasure for me to write: only I am one of the worst of letter-writers, and have little

enough to talk about except that (to me) most interesting subject, *myself*. Georgie will tell you how inexhaustible I find that subject in talk with my friends, and so you must put up with your share of it if you want to hear from me.

I am wanting to settle down now into a really industrious man: for I do not mean to go to Iceland again if I can help it, and it is strange what a hole in my life that determination has made. I have had a good deal to do of a trivial kind, and to say the truth have been busy enough over such things: but it seems I must needs try to make myself unhappy with doing what I find difficult—or impossible—so I am going to take to drawing from models again, for my soul's health chiefly, for little hope can I have ever to do anything serious in the thing. It must be six years now since I made a habit of drawing and I never, if you can understand that, had the *painter's memory* which makes it easy to put down on paper what you think you see; nor indeed can I see any scene with a frame as it were round it, though in my own way I can realize things vividly enough to myself—also I am getting old, hard on 40 Louie—so add all things together, and if I can tell you in six months time that I have been persevering in my drawing, I give you leave therewith to praise my patience, though I can scarcely hope it will come to that.

It is wet and wild weather here now, but somehow I don't dislike it, and there is something touching about the real world bursting into London with these gales; and it makes me wish to travel in spite of my knowledge of how sick I should be at sea. It makes me feel lazy in the mornings though and I feel as if I should like to sit in my pretty room at Turnham Green reading some hitherto unprinted Dumas say about as good as the 3 Musketeers.

By the way did you ever steep yourself in that delightful series; did you ever read all the Vicomte de Bragelonne and wish at the end that it was double as long: if not let me beseech you to do so now and be rewarded: did you ever read what I think Dumas' best book Olympe de Cleves? I

made Georgie read it once, and she enjoyed it very much, but we used to quarrel desperately about the character of the hero whether any woman could have stood him at all, I taking his part: I think I have rather altered my opinion now.

Excuse my saying abruptly good-bye at this point, for I see it is ½ past 2 and I have an engagement to keep: I hope you will be able to read my writing.

Hoping to hear better news of you soon.

I am

Yours affectionately

WILLIAM MORRIS.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

HOPES AND FEARS FOR ART

The following lectures were first published in pamphlet form:

The Lesser Arts: under the title of The Decorative Arts, their relation to modern life and progress. London, Ellis & White [1878]. In a reissue the date was printed.

The Art of the People: under the title of Address delivered in the Town Hall, Birmingham . . . Birmingham [1879].

The Beauty of Life: under the title of Labour and Pleasure *versus* Labour and Sorrow, Birmingham [1880].

These, with Making the Best of It, and The Prospects of Architecture under Civilization, were gathered into a volume under the title of Hopes and Fears for Art, London, Ellis & White, 1882, crown octavo and 25 on Whatman's paper demy octavo; a second edition in 1883; third edition 1883.

Transferred to Reeves & Turner.

Transferred to Longmans, Green & Co. 1896.

New edition March 1898.

Reprinted October 1903 and May 1911.

Golden Type edition in quarto with Signs of Change, Longmans, Green & Co. May 1902.

Included in Volume XXII of the Collected Works of William Morris. December 1914.

LECTURES ON ART AND INDUSTRY

These lectures and papers were first published in the following forms:

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The Revival of Architecture: Fortnightly Review, May, 1888.

The Revival of Handicraft: Fortnightly Review, November, 1888.

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They were afterwards republished, together with some lectures and papers on Socialism, in one volume under the title of Architecture, Industry and Wealth.

First collected edition printed in the Golden Type in quarto, Longmans, Green & Co. July 1902.

New edition in demy octavo, Longmans, Green & Co. November 1902.

The remaining lectures and papers in this volume were printed at the Chiswick Press, in the Golden Type, in octavo, on Kelmscott Press paper, and published by Longmans, Green & Co. They are given here in the order of publication:

I. Address at the Distribution of Prizes at Birmingham 1894. Longmans, Green & Co. June 1898.

II. Art and the Beauty of the Earth. Longmans, Green & Co. January 1899.

III. Some Hints on Pattern-designing. October 1899.

IV. Architecture and History, Westminster Abbey. October 1900.

V. Art and its Producers, VI. The Arts and Crafts of Today. June 1901.

Nos. V. and VI. were first published in the transactions of The National Association for the Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry. Liverpool meeting, 1888, Edinburgh meeting, 1889.

Included in Volume XXII of the Collected Works of William Morris. December 1914.

HOPES AND FEARS FOR ART

THE LESSER ARTS. DELIVERED BEFORE THE TRADES' GUILD OF LEARNING, DECEMBER 4, 1877.

HEREAFTER I hope in another lecture to have the pleasure of laying before you an historical survey of the lesser, or, as they are called, the Decorative Arts, and I must confess it would have been pleasanter to me to have begun my talk with you by entering at once upon the subject of the history of this great industry; but, as I have something to say in a third lecture about various matters connected with the practice of Decoration among ourselves in these days, I feel that I should be in a false position before you, and one that might lead to confusion, or overmuch explanation, if I did not let you know what I think on the nature and scope of these arts, on their condition at the present time, and their outlook in times to come. In doing this it is like enough that I shall say things with which you will very much disagree; I must ask you therefore from the outset to believe that whatever I may blame or whatever I may praise, I neither, when I think of what history has been, am inclined to lament the past, to despise the present, or despair of the future; that I believe all the change and stir about us is a sign of the world's life, and that it will lead—by ways, indeed, of which we have no guess—to the bettering of all mankind.

Now as to the scope and nature of these Arts I have to say, that though when I come more into the details of my subject I shall not meddle much with the great art of Architecture, and less still with the great arts commonly called Sculpture and Painting, yet I cannot in my own mind quite sever them from those lesser so-called Decorative Arts, which I have to speak about: it is only in latter times, and under the most intricate conditions of life, that they have fallen apart from one another; and I hold that, when they are so parted, it is ill for the Arts altogether: the lesser ones become trivial, mechanical, unintelligent, incapable of resist-

ing the changes pressed upon them by fashion or dishonesty; while the greater, however they may be practised for a while by men of great minds and wonder-working hands, unhelped by the lesser, unhelped by each other, are sure to lose their dignity of popular arts, and become nothing but dull adjuncts to unmeaning pomp, or ingenious toys for a few rich and idle men.

However, I have not undertaken to talk to you of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, in the narrower sense of those words, since, most unhappily as I think, these master-arts, these arts more specially of the intellect, are at the present day divorced from decoration in its narrower sense. Our subject is that great body of art, by means of which men have at all times more or less striven to beautify the familiar matters of everyday life: a wide subject, a great industry; both a great part of the history of the world, and a most helpful instrument to the study of that history.

A very great industry indeed, comprising the crafts of house-building, painting, joinery and carpentry, smiths' work, pottery and glass-making, weaving, and many others: a body of art most important to the public in general, but still more so to us handicraftsmen; since there is scarce anything that they use, and that we fashion, but it has always been thought to be unfinished till it has had some touch or other of decoration about it. True it is that in many or most cases we have got so used to this ornament, that we look upon it as if it had grown of itself, and note it no more than the mosses on the dry sticks with which we light our fires. So much the worse! for there *is* the decoration, or some pretence of it, and it has, or ought to have, a use and a meaning. For, and this is at the root of the whole matter, everything made by man's hands has a form, which must be either beautiful or ugly; beautiful if it is in accord with Nature, and helps her; ugly if it is discordant with Nature, and thwarts her; it cannot be indifferent: we, for our parts, are busy or sluggish, eager or unhappy, and our eyes are apt to get dulled to this eventfulness of form in those things which we

are always looking at. Now it is one of the chief uses of decoration, the chief part of its alliance with nature, that it has to sharpen our dulled senses in this matter: for this end are those wonders of intricate patterns interwoven, those strange forms invented, which men have so long delighted in: forms and intricacies that do not necessarily imitate nature, but in which the hand of the craftsman is guided to work in the way that she does, till the web, the cup, or the knife, look as natural, nay as lovely, as the green field, the river bank, or the mountain flint.

To give people pleasure in the things they must perforce *use*, that is one great office of decoration; to give people pleasure in the things they must perforce *make*, that is the other use of it.

Does not our subject look important enough now? I say that without these arts, our rest would be vacant and uninteresting, our labour mere endurance, mere wearing away of body and mind.

As for that last use of these arts, the giving us pleasure in our work, I scarcely know how to speak strongly enough of it; and yet if I did not know the value of repeating a truth again and again, I should have to excuse myself to you for saying any more about this, when I remember how a great man now living has spoken of it: I mean my friend Professor John Ruskin: if you read the chapter in the 2nd vol. of his "Stones of Venice" entitled, "On the Nature of Gothic, and the Office of the Workman therein," you will read at once the truest and the most eloquent words that can possibly be said on the subject. What I have to say upon it can scarcely be more than an echo of his words, yet I repeat there is some use in reiterating a truth, lest it be forgotten; so I will say this much further: we all know what people have said about the curse of labour, and what heavy and grievous nonsense are the more part of their words thereupon; whereas indeed the real curses of craftsmen have been the curse of stupidity, and the curse of injustice from within and from without: no, I cannot suppose there is anybody here who

would think it either a good life, or an amusing one, to sit with one's hands before one doing nothing—to live like a gentleman, as fools call it.

Nevertheless there *is* dull work to be done, and a weary business it is setting men about such work, and seeing them through it, and I would rather do the work twice over with my own hands than have such a job: but now only let the arts which we are talking of beautify our labour, and be widely spread, intelligent, well understood both by the maker and the user, let them grow in one word *popular*, and there will be pretty much an end of dull work and its wearing slavery; and no man will any longer have an excuse for talking about the curse of labour, no man will any longer have an excuse for evading the blessing of labour. I believe there is nothing that will aid the world's progress so much as the attainment of this; I protest there is nothing in the world that I desire so much as this, wrapped up, as I am sure it is, with changes political and social, that in one way or another we all desire.

Now if the objection be made; that these arts have been the handmaids of luxury, of tyranny, and of superstition, I must needs say that it is true in a sense; they have been so used, as many other excellent things have been. But it is also true that, among some nations, their most vigorous and freest times have been the very blossoming-times of art: while at the same time, I must allow that these decorative arts have flourished among oppressed peoples, who have seemed to have no hope of freedom: yet I do not think that we shall be wrong in thinking that at such times, among such peoples, art, at least, was free; when it has not been, when it has really been gripped by superstition, or by luxury, it has straightway begun to sicken under that grip. Nor must you forget that when men say popes, kings, and emperors built such and such buildings, it is a mere way of speaking. You look in your history-books to see who built Westminster Abbey, who built St. Sophia at Constantinople, and they tell you Henry III., Justinian the Emperor.

Did they? or, rather, men like you and me, handicraftsmen, who have left no names behind them, nothing but their work?

Now as these arts call people's attention and interest to the matters of every-day life in the present, so also, and that I think is no little matter, they call our attention at every step to that history, of which, I said before, they are so great a part; for no nation, no state of society, however rude, has been wholly without them: nay, there are peoples not a few, of whom we know scarce anything, save that they thought such and such forms beautiful. So strong is the bond between history and decoration, that in the practice of the latter we cannot, if we would, wholly shake off the influence of past times over what we do at present. I do not think it is too much to say that no man, however original he may be, can sit down to-day and draw the ornament of a cloth, or the form of an ordinary vessel or piece of furniture, that will be other than a development or a degradation of forms used hundreds of years ago; and these, too, very often, forms that once had a serious meaning, though they are now become little more than a habit of the hand; forms that were once perhaps the mysterious symbols of worships and beliefs now little remembered or wholly forgotten. Those who have diligently followed the delightful study of these arts are able as if through windows to look upon the life of the past—the very first beginnings of thought among nations whom we cannot even name; the terrible empires of the ancient East; the free vigour and glory of Greece; the heavy weight, the firm grasp of Rome; the fall of her temporal Empire which spread so wide about the world all that good and evil which men can never forget, and never cease to feel; the clashing of East and West, South and North, about her rich and fruitful daughter Byzantium; the rise, the dissensions, and the waning of Islam; the wanderings of Scandinavia; the Crusades; the foundation of the States of modern Europe; the struggles of free thought with ancient dying system—with all these events and their meaning is the

history of popular art interwoven; with all this, I say, the careful student of decoration as an historical industry must be familiar. When I think of this, and the usefulness of all this knowledge, at a time when history has become so earnest a study amongst us as to have given us, as it were, a new sense: at a time when we so long to know the reality of all that has happened, and are to be put off no longer with the dull records of the battles and intrigues of kings and scoundrels,—I say when I think of all this, I hardly know how to say that this interweaving of the Decorative Arts with the history of the past is of less importance than their dealings with the life of the present: for should not these memories also be a part of our daily life?

And now let me recapitulate a little before I go further, before we begin to look into the condition of the arts at the present day. These arts, I have said, are part of a great system invented for the expression of a man's delight in beauty: all peoples and times have used them; they have been the joy of free nations, and the solace of oppressed nations; religion has used and elevated them, has abused and degraded them; they are connected with all history, and are clear teachers of it; and, best of all, they are the sweeteners of human labour, both to the handicraftsman, whose life is spent in working in them, and to people in general who are influenced by the sight of them at every turn of the day's work: they make our toil happy, our rest fruitful.

And now if all I have said seems to you but mere open-mouthed praise of these arts, I must say that it is not for nothing that what I have hitherto put before you has taken that form.

It is because I must now ask you this question: All these good things—will you have them? will you cast them from you?

Are you surprised at my question—you, most of whom, like myself, are engaged in the actual practice of the arts that are, or ought to be, popular?

In explanation, I must somewhat repeat what I have

already said. Time was when the mystery and wonder of handicrafts were well acknowledged by the world, when imagination and fancy mingled with all things made by man; and in those days all handicraftsmen were *artists*, as we should now call them. But the thought of man became more intricate, more difficult to express; art grew a heavier thing to deal with, and its labour was more divided among great men, lesser men, and little men; till that art, which was once scarce more than a rest of body and soul, as the hand cast the shuttle or swung the hammer, became to some men so serious a labour, that their working lives have been one long tragedy of hope and fear, joy and trouble. This was the growth of art: like all growth, it was good and fruitful for awhile; like all fruitful growth, it grew into decay; like all decay of what was once fruitful, it will grow into something new.

Into decay; for as the arts sundered into the greater and the lesser, contempt on one side, carelessness on the other arose, both begotten of ignorance of that *philosophy* of the Decorative Arts, a hint of which I have tried just now to put before you. The artist came out from the handicraftsmen, and left them without hope of elevation, while he himself was left without the help of intelligent, industrious sympathy. Both have suffered; the artist no less than the workman. It is with art as it fares with a company of soldiers before a redoubt, when the captain runs forward full of hope and energy, but looks not behind him to see if his men are following, and they hang back, not knowing why they are brought there to die. The captain's life is spent for nothing, and his men are sullen prisoners in the redoubt of Unhappiness and Brutality.

I must in plain words say of the Decorative Arts, of all the arts, that it is not so much that we are inferior in them to all who have gone before us, but rather that they are in a state of anarchy and disorganisation, which makes a sweeping change necessary and certain.

So that again I ask my question, All that good fruit which

the arts should bear, will you have it? will you cast it from you? Shall that sweeping change that must come, be the change of loss or of gain?

We who believe in the continuous life of the world, surely we are bound to hope that the change will bring us gain and not loss, and to strive to bring that gain about.

Yet how the world may answer my question, who can say? A man in his short life can see but a little way ahead, and even in mine wonderful and unexpected things have come to pass. I must needs say that therein lies my hope rather than in all I see going on round about us. Without disputing that if the imaginative arts perish, some new thing, at present unguessed of, *may* be put forward to supply their loss in men's lives, I cannot feel happy in that prospect, nor can I believe that mankind will endure such a loss for ever: but in the meantime the present state of the arts and their dealings with modern life and progress seem to me to point, in appearance at least, to this immediate future; that the world, which has for a long time busied itself about other matters than the arts, and has carelessly let them sink lower and lower, till many not uncultivated men, ignorant of what they once were, and hopeless of what they might yet be, look upon them with mere contempt; that the world, I say, thus busied and hurried, will one day wipe the slate, and be clean rid in her impatience of the whole matter with all its tangle and trouble.

And then—what then?

Even now amid the squalor of London it is hard to imagine what it will be. Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, with the crowd of lesser arts that belong to them, these, together with Music and Poetry, will be dead and forgotten, will no longer excite or amuse people in the least: for, once more, we must not deceive ourselves; the death of one art means the death of all; the only difference in their fate will be that the luckiest will be eaten the last—the luckiest, or the unluckiest: in all that has to do with beauty the invention and ingenuity of man will have come to a dead stop;

and all the while Nature will go on with her eternal recurrence of lovely changes—spring, summer, autumn, and winter; sunshine, rain, and snow; storm and fair weather; dawn, noon, and sunset; day and night—ever bearing witness against man that he has deliberately chosen ugliness instead of beauty, and to live where he is strongest amidst squalor or blank emptiness.

You see, sirs, we cannot quite imagine it; any more, perhaps, than our forefathers of ancient London, living in the pretty, carefully whitened houses, with the famous church and its huge spire rising above them—than they, passing about the fair gardens running down to the broad river, could have imagined a whole county or more covered over with hideous hovels, big, middle-sized, and little, which should one day be called London.

Sirs, I say that this dead blank of the arts that I more than dread is difficult even now to imagine; yet I fear that I must say that if it does not come about, it will be owing to some turn of events which we cannot at present foresee: but I hold that if it does happen, it will only last for a time, that it will be but a burning up of the gathered weeds, so that the field may bear more abundantly. I hold that men would wake up after a while, and look round and find the dulness unbearable, and begin once more inventing, imitating, and imagining, as in earlier days.

That faith comforts me, and I can say calmly if the blank space must happen, it must, and amidst its darkness the new seed must sprout. So it has been before: first comes birth, and hope scarcely conscious of itself; then the flower and fruit of mastery, with hope more than conscious enough, passing into insolence, as decay follows ripeness; and then—the new birth again.

Meantime it is the plain duty of all who look seriously on the arts to do their best to save the world from what at the best will be a loss, the result of ignorance and unwisdom; to prevent, in fact, that most discouraging of all changes, the supplying the place of an extinct brutality by a new one;

nay, even if those who really care for the arts are so weak and few that they can do nothing else, it may be their business to keep alive some tradition, some memory of the past, so that the new life when it comes may not waste itself more than enough in fashioning wholly new forms for its new spirit.

To what side then shall those turn for help, who really understand the gain of a great art in the world, and the loss of peace and good life that must follow from the lack of it? I think that they must begin by acknowledging that the ancient art, the art of unconscious intelligence, as one should call it, which began without a date, at least so long ago as those strange and masterly scratchings on mammoth-bones and the like found but the other day in the drift—that this art of unconscious intelligence is all but dead; that what little of it is left lingers among half-civilised nations, and is growing coarser, feebler, less intelligent year by year; nay, it is mostly at the mercy of some commercial accident, such as the arrival of a few shiploads of European dye-stuffs or a few dozen orders from European merchants: this they must recognize, and must hope to see in time its place filled by a new art of conscious intelligence, the birth of wiser, simpler, freer ways of life than the world leads now, than the world has ever led.

I said, *to see* this in time; I do not mean to say that our own eyes will look upon it: it may be so far off, as indeed it seems to some, that many would scarcely think it worth while thinking of: but there are some of us who cannot turn our faces to the wall, or sit deedless because our hope seems somewhat dim; and, indeed, I think that while the signs of the last decay of the old art with all the evils that must follow in its train are only too obvious about us, so on the other hand there are not wanting signs of the new dawn beyond that possible night of the arts, of which I have before spoken; this sign chiefly, that there are some few at least who are heartily discontented with things as they are, and crave for something better, or at least some promise of it—this best

of signs: for I suppose that if some half-dozen men at any time earnestly set their hearts on something coming about which is not discordant with nature, it will come to pass one day or other; because it is not by accident that an idea comes into the heads of a few; rather they are pushed on, and forced to speak or act by something stirring in the heart of the world which would otherwise be left without expression.

By what means then shall those work who long for reform in the arts, and who shall they seek to kindle into eager desire for possession of beauty, and better still, for the development of the faculty that creates beauty?

People say to me often enough: If you want to make your art succeed and flourish, you must make it the fashion: a phrase which I confess annoys me; for they mean by it that I should spend one day over my work to two days in trying to convince rich, and supposed influential people, that they care very much for what they really do not care in the least, so that it may happen according to the proverb: *Bell-wether took the leap, and we all went over.* Well, such advisers are right if they are content with the thing lasting but a little while; say till you can make a little money—if you don't get pinched by the door shutting too quickly: otherwise they are wrong: the people they are thinking of have too many strings to their bow, and can turn their backs too easily on a thing that fails, for it to be safe work trusting to their whims: it is not their fault, they cannot help it, but they have no chance of spending time enough over the arts to know anything practical of them, and they must of necessity be in the hands of those who spend their time in pushing fashion this way and that for their own advantage.

Sirs, there is no help to be got out of these latter, or those who let themselves be led by them: the only real help for the decorative arts must come from those who work in them; nor must they be led, they must lead.

You whose hands make those things that should be works of art, you must be all artists, and good artists too, before the public at large can take real interest in such things; and

when you have become so, I promise you that you shall lead the fashion; fashion shall follow your hands obediently enough.

That is the only way in which we can get a supply of intelligent popular art: a few artists of the kind so-called now, what can they do working in the teeth of difficulties thrown in their way by what is called Commerce, but which should be called greed of money? working helplessly among the crowd of those who are ridiculously called manufacturers, i.e. handicraftsmen, though the more part of them never did a stroke of hand-work in their lives, and are nothing better than capitalists and salesmen. What can these grains of sand do, I say, amidst the enormous mass of work turned out every year which professes in some way to be decorative art, but the decoration of which no one heeds except the salesmen who have to do with it, and are hard put to it to supply the cravings of the public for something new, not for something pretty?

The remedy, I repeat, is plain if it can be applied; the handicraftsman, left behind by the artist when the arts sundered, must come up with him, must work side by side with him: apart from the difference between a great master and a scholar, apart from the differences of the natural bent of men's minds, which would make one man an imitative, and another an architectural or decorative artist, there should be no difference between those employed on strictly ornamental work; and the body of artists dealing with this should quicken with their art all makers of things into artists also, in proportion to the necessities and uses of the things they would make.

I know what stupendous difficulties, social and economical, there are in the way of this; yet I think that they seem to be greater than they are: and of one thing I am sure, that no real living decorative art is possible if this is impossible.

It is not impossible, on the contrary it is certain to come about, if you are at heart desirous to quicken the arts; if the world will, for the sake of beauty and decency, sacrifice some

of the things it is so busy over (many of which I think are not very worthy of its trouble), art will begin to grow again; as for those difficulties above mentioned, some of them I know will in any case melt away before the steady change of the relative conditions of men; the rest, reason and resolute attention to the laws of nature, which are also the laws of art, will dispose of little by little: once more, the way will not be far to seek, if the will be with us.

Yet, granted the will, and though the way lies ready to us, we must not be discouraged if the journey seem barren enough at first, nay, not even if things seem to grow worse for a while: for it is natural enough that the very evil which has forced on the beginning of reform should look uglier, while on the one hand life and wisdom are building up the new, and on the other folly and deadness are hugging the old to them.

In this, as in all other matters, lapse of time will be needed before things seem to straighten, and the courage and patience that does not despise small things lying ready to be done; and care and watchfulness, lest we begin to build the wall ere the footings are well in; and always through all things much humility that is not easily cast down by failure, that seeks to be taught, and is ready to learn.

For your teachers, they must be Nature and History: as for the first, that you must learn of it is so obvious that I need not dwell upon that now: hereafter, when I have to speak more of matters of detail, I may have to speak of the manner in which you must learn of Nature. As to the second, I do not think that any man but one of the highest genius, could do anything in these days without much study of ancient art, and even he would be much hindered if he lacked it. If you think that this contradicts what I said about the death of that ancient art, and the necessity I implied for an art that should be characteristic of the present day, I can only say that, in these times of plenteous knowledge and meagre performance, if we do not study the ancient work directly and learn to understand it, we shall find ourselves

influenced by the feeble work all round us, and shall be copying the better work through the copyists and *without* understanding it, which will by no means bring about intelligent art. Let us therefore study it wisely, be taught by it, kindled by it; all the while determining not to imitate or repeat it; to have either no art at all, or an art which we have made our own.

Yet I am almost brought to a stand-still when bidding you to study nature and the history of art, by remembering that this is London, and what it is like: how can I ask working-men passing up and down these hideous streets day by day to care about beauty? If it were politics, we must care about that; or science, you could wrap yourselves up in the study of facts, no doubt, without much caring what goes on about you—but beauty! do you not see what terrible difficulties beset art, owing to a long neglect of art—and neglect of reason, too, in this matter? It is such a heavy question by what effort, by what dead-lift, you can thrust this difficulty from you, that I must perforce set it aside for the present, and must at least hope that the study of history and its monuments will help you somewhat herein. If you can really fill your minds with memories of great works of art, and great times of art, you will, I think, be able to a certain extent to look through the aforesaid ugly surroundings, and will be moved to discontent of what is careless and brutal now, and will, I hope, at last be so much discontented with what is bad, that you will determine to bear no longer that short-sighted, reckless brutality of squalor that so disgraces our intricate civilization.

Well, at any rate, London is good for this, that it is well off for museums—which I heartily wish were to be got at seven days in the week instead of six, or at least on the only day on which an ordinarily busy man, one of the taxpayers who support them, can as a rule see them quietly—and certainly any of us who may have any natural turn for art must get more help from frequenting them than one can well say. It is true, however, that people need some preliminary in-

struction before they can get all the good possible to be got from the prodigious treasures of art possessed by the country in that form: there also one sees things in a piecemeal way: nor can I deny that there is something melancholy about a museum, such a tale of violence, destruction, and carelessness, as its treasured scraps tell us.

But moreover you may sometimes have an opportunity of studying ancient art in a narrower but a more intimate, a more kindly form, the monuments of our own land. Sometimes only, since we live in the middle of this world of brick and mortar, and there is little else left us amidst it, except the ghost of the great church at Westminster, ruined as its exterior is by the stupidity of the restoring architect, and insulted as its glorious interior is by the pompous undertakers' lies, by the vainglory and ignorance of the last two centuries and a half—little besides that and the matchless Hall near it: but when we can get beyond that smoky world, there, out in the country, we may still see the works of our fathers yet alive amidst the very nature they were wrought into, and of which they are so completely a part. For there indeed if anywhere, in the English country, in the days when people cared about such things, was there a full sympathy between the works of man, and the land they were made for. The land is a little land; too much shut up within the narrow seas, as it seems, to have much space for swelling into hugeness: there are no great wastes overwhelming in their dreariness, no great solitudes of forests, no terrible untrodden mountain-walls: all is measured, mingled, varied, gliding easily one thing into another: little rivers, little plains, swelling, speedily-changing uplands, all beset with handsome orderly trees; little hills, little mountains, netted over with the walls of sheep-walks: all is little; yet not foolish and blank, but serious rather, and abundant of meaning for such as choose to seek it: it is neither prison nor palace, but a decent home.

All which I neither praise nor blame, but say that so it is: some people praise this homeliness overmuch, as if the land

were the very axle-tree of the world; so do not I, nor any unblinded by pride in themselves and all that belongs to them: others there are who scorn it and the tameness of it: not I any the more: though it would indeed be hard if there were nothing else in the world, no wonders, no terrors, no unspeakable beauties: yet when we think what a small part of the world's history, past, present, and to come, is this land we live in, and how much smaller still in the history of the arts, and yet how our forefathers clung to it, and with what care and pains they adorned it, this unromantic, uneventful-looking land of England, surely by this too our hearts may be touched, and our hope quickened.

For as was the land, such was the art of it while folk yet troubled themselves about such things; it strove little to impress people either by pomp or ingenuity: not unseldom it fell into commonplace, rarely it rose into majesty; yet was it never oppressive, never a slave's nightmare nor an insolent boast: and at its best it had an inventiveness, an individuality that grander styles have never overpassed: its best too, and that was in its very heart, was given as freely to the yeoman's house, and the humble village church, as to the lord's palace or the mighty cathedral: never coarse, though often rude enough, sweet, natural and unaffected, an art of peasants rather than of merchant-princes or courtiers, it must be a hard heart, I think, that does not love it: whether a man has been born among it like ourselves, or has come wonderingly on its simplicity from all the grandeur over-seas. A peasant art, I say, and it clung fast to the life of the people, and still lived among the cottagers and yeomen in many parts of the country while the big houses were being built "French and fine": still lived also in many a quaint pattern of loom and printing-block, and embroiderer's needle, while over-seas stupid pomp had extinguished all nature and freedom, and art was become, in France especially, the mere expression of that successful and exultant rascality, which in the flesh no long time afterwards went down into the pit for ever.

Such was the English art, whose history is in a sense at your doors, grown scarce indeed, and growing scarcer year by year, not only through greedy destruction, of which there is certainly less than there used to be, but also through the attacks of another foe, called nowadays "restoration."

I must not make a long story about this, but also I cannot quite pass it over, since I have pressed on you the study of these ancient monuments. Thus the matter stands: these old buildings have been altered and added to century after century, often beautifully, always historically; their very value, a great part of it, lay in that: they have suffered almost always from neglect also, often from violence (that latter a piece of history often far from uninteresting), but ordinary obvious mending would almost always have kept them standing, pieces of nature and of history.

But of late years a great uprising of ecclesiastical zeal, coinciding with a great increase of study, and consequently of knowledge of mediæval architecture, has driven people into spending their money on these buildings, not merely with the purpose of repairing them, of keeping them safe, clean, and wind and water-tight, but also of "restoring" them to some ideal state of perfection; sweeping away if possible all signs of what has befallen them at least since the Reformation, and often since dates much earlier: this has sometimes been done with much disregard of art and entirely from ecclesiastical zeal, but oftener it has been well meant enough as regards art: yet you will not have listened to what I have said to-night if you do not see that from my point of view this restoration must be as impossible to bring about, as the attempt at it is destructive to the buildings so dealt with: I scarcely like to think what a great part of them have been made nearly useless to students of art and history: unless you knew a great deal about architecture you perhaps would scarce understand what terrible damage has been done by that dangerous "little knowledge" in this matter: but at least it is easy to be understood, that to deal recklessly with valuable (and national) monuments which,

when once gone, can never be replaced by any splendour of modern art, is doing a very sorry service to the State.

You will see by all that I have said on this study of ancient art that I mean by education herein something much wider than the teaching of a definite art in schools of design, and that it must be something that we must do more or less for ourselves: I mean by it a systematic concentration of our thoughts on the matter, a studying of it in all ways, careful and laborious practice of it, and a determination to do nothing but what is known to be good in workmanship and design.

Of course, however, both as an instrument of that study we have been speaking of, as well as of the practice of the arts, all handicraftsmen should be taught to draw very carefully; as indeed all people should be taught drawing who are not physically incapable of learning it: but the art of drawing so taught would not be the art of designing, but only a means towards this end, *general capability in dealing with the arts.*

For I wish specially to impress this upon you, that *designing* cannot be taught at all in a school: continued practice will help a man who is naturally a designer, continual notice of nature and of art: no doubt those who have some faculty for designing are still numerous, and they want from a school certain technical teaching, just as they want tools: in these days also, when the best school, the school of successful practice going on around you, is at such a low ebb, they do undoubtedly want instruction in the history of the arts: these two things schools of design can give: but the royal road of a set of rules deduced from a sham science of design, that is itself not a science but another set of rules, will lead nowhere—or, let us rather say, to beginning again.

As to the kind of drawing that should be taught to men engaged in ornamental work, there is only *one best* way of teaching drawing, and that is teaching the scholar to draw the human figure: both because the lines of a man's body are much more subtle than anything else, and because you

can more surely be found out and set right if you go wrong. I do think that such teaching as this, given to all people who care for it, would help the revival of the arts very much: the habit of discriminating between right and wrong, the sense of pleasure in drawing a good line, would really, I think, be education in the due sense of the word for all such people as had the germs of invention in them; yet as aforesaid, in this age of the world it would be mere affectation to pretend to shut one's eyes to the art of past ages: that also we must study. If other circumstances, social and economical, do not stand in our way, that is to say, if the world is not too busy to allow us to have Decorative Arts at all, these two are the *direct* means by which we shall get them; that is, general cultivation of the powers of the mind, general cultivation of the powers of the eye and hand.

Perhaps that seems to you very commonplace advice and a very roundabout road; nevertheless 'tis a certain one, if by any road you desire to come to the new art, which is my subject to-night: if you do not, and if those germs of invention, which, as I said just now, are no doubt still common enough among men, are left neglected and undeveloped, the laws of Nature will assert themselves in this as in other matters, and the faculty of design itself will gradually fade from the race of man. Sirs, shall we approach nearer to perfection by casting away so large a part of that intelligence which makes us *men?*

And now before I make an end, I want to call your attention to certain things, that, owing to our neglect of the arts for other business, bar that good road to us and are such an hindrance, that, till they are dealt with, it is hard even to make a beginning of our endeavour. And if my talk should seem to grow too serious for our subject, as indeed I think it cannot do, I beg you to remember what I said earlier, of how the arts all hang together. Now there is one art of which the old architect of Edward the Third's time was thinking—he who founded New College at Oxford, I mean—when he took this for his motto: "Manners maketh man": he meant

by manners the art of morals, the art of living worthily, and like a man. I must needs claim this art also as dealing with my subject.

There is a great deal of sham work in the world, hurtful to the buyer, more hurtful to the seller, if he only knew it, most hurtful to the maker: how good a foundation it would be towards getting good Decorative Art, that is ornamental workmanship, if we craftsmen were to resolve to turn out nothing but excellent workmanship in all things, instead of having, as we too often have now, a very low average standard of work, which we often fall below.

I do not blame either one class or another in this matter, I blame all: to set aside our own class of handicraftsmen, of whose shortcomings you and I know so much that we need talk no more about it, I know that the public in general are set on having things cheap, being so ignorant that they do not know when they get them nasty also; so ignorant that they neither know nor care whether they give a man his due: I know that the manufacturers (so called) are so set on carrying out competition to its utmost, competition of cheapness, not of excellence, that they meet the bargain-hunters half way, and cheerfully furnish them with nasty wares at the cheap rate they are asked for, by means of what can be called by no prettier name than fraud. England has of late been too much busied with the counting-house and not enough with the workshop: with the result that the counting-house at the present moment is rather barren of orders.

I say all classes are to blame in this matter, but also I say that the remedy lies with the handicraftsmen, who are not ignorant of these things like the public, and who have no call to be greedy and isolated like the manufacturers or middlemen; the duty and honour of educating the public lies with them, and they have in them the seeds of order and organization which make that duty the easier.

When will they see to this and help to make men of us all by insisting on this most weighty piece of manners: so

that we may adorn life with the pleasure of cheerfully *buying* goods at their due price; with the pleasure of *selling* goods that we could be proud of both for fair price and fair workmanship; with the pleasure of working soundly and without haste at *making* goods that we could be proud of?—much the greatest pleasure of the three is that last, such a pleasure as, I think, the world has none like it.

You must not say that this piece of manners lies out of my subject: it is essentially a part of it and most important: for I am bidding you learn to be artists, if art is not to come to an end amongst us: and what is an artist but a workman who is determined that, whatever else happens, his work shall be excellent? or, to put it in another way: the decoration of workmanship, what is it but the expression of man's pleasure in successful labour? But what pleasure can there be in *bad* work, in *un*successful labour; why should we decorate *that?* and how can we bear to be always unsuccessful in our labour?

As greed of unfair gain, wanting to be paid for what we have not earned, cumbers our path with this tangle of bad work, of sham work, so the heaped-up money which this greed has brought us (for greed will have its way, like all other strong passions), this money, I say, gathered into heaps little and big, with all the false distinction which so unhappily it yet commands amongst us, has raised up against the arts a barrier of the love of luxury and show, which is of all obvious hindrances the worst to overpass: the highest and most cultivated classes are not free from the vulgarity of it, the lower are not free from its pretence. I beg you to remember both as a remedy against this, and as explaining exactly what I mean, that nothing can be a work of art which is not useful; that is to say, which does not minister to the body when well under command of the mind, or which does not amuse, soothe, or elevate the mind in a healthy state. What tons upon tons of unutterable rubbish pretending to be works of art in some degree would this maxim clear out of our London houses, if it were understood and acted upon!

To my mind it is only here and there (out of the kitchen) that you can find in a well-to-do house things that are of any use at all: as a rule all the decoration (so called) that has got there is there for the sake of show, not because anybody likes it. I repeat, this stupidity goes through all classes of society: the silk curtains in my Lord's drawing-room are no more a matter of art to him than the powder in his footman's hair; the kitchen in a country farmhouse is most commonly a pleasant and homelike place, the parlour dreary and useless.

Simplicity of life, begetting simplicity of taste, that is, a love for sweet and lofty things, is of all matters most necessary for the birth of the new and better art we crave for; simplicity everywhere, in the palace as well as in the cottage.

Still more is this necessary, cleanliness and decency everywhere, in the cottage as well as in the palace: the lack of that is a serious piece of *manners* for us to correct: that lack and all the inequalities of life, and the heaped-up thoughtlessness and disorder of so many centuries that cause it: and as yet it is only a very few men who have begun to think about a remedy for it in its widest range: even in its narrower aspect, in the defacements of our big towns by all that commerce brings with it, who heeds it? who tries to control their squalor and hideousness? there is nothing but thoughtlessness and recklessness in the matter: the helplessness of people who don't live long enough to do a thing themselves, and have not manliness and foresight enough to begin the work, and pass it on to those that shall come after them.

Is money to be gathered? cut down the pleasant trees among the houses, pull down ancient and venerable buildings for the money that a few square yards of London dirt will fetch; blacken rivers, hide the sun and poison the air with smoke and worse, and it's nobody's business to see to it or mend it: that is all that modern commerce, the counting-house forgetful of the workshop, will do for us herein.

And Science—we have loved her well, and followed her diligently, what will she do? I fear she is so much in the pay of the counting-house—the counting-house and the drill-

sergeant—that she is too busy, and will for the present do nothing. Yet there are matters which I should have thought easy for her; say for example teaching Manchester how to consume its own smoke, or Leeds how to get rid of its superfluous black dye without turning it into the river, which would be as much worth her attention as the production of the heaviest of heavy black silks, or the biggest of useless guns. Anyhow, however it be done, unless people care about carrying on their business without making the world hideous, how can they care about Art? I know it will cost much both of time and money to better these things even a little; but I do not see how these can be better spent than in making life cheerful and honourable for others and for ourselves; and the gain of good life to the country at large that would result from men seriously setting about the bettering of the decency of our big towns would be priceless, even if nothing specially good befell the arts in consequence: I do not know that it would; but I should begin to think matters hopeful if men turned their attention to such things, and I repeat that, unless they do so, we can scarcely even begin with any hope our endeavours for the bettering of the arts.

Unless something or other is done to give all men some pleasure for the eyes and rest for the mind in the aspect of their own and their neighbours' houses, until the contrast is less disgraceful between the fields where beasts live and the streets where men live, I suppose that the practice of the arts must be mainly kept in the hands of a few highly cultivated men, who can go often to beautiful places, whose education enables them, in the contemplation of the past glories of the world, to shut out from their view the everyday squalors that the most of men move in. Sirs, I believe that art has such sympathy with cheerful freedom, openheartedness and reality, so much she sickens under selfishness and luxury, that she will not live thus isolated and exclusive. I will go further than this and say that on such terms I do not wish her to live. I protest that it would be a shame

to an honest artist to enjoy what he had huddled up to himself of such art, as it would be for a rich man to sit and eat dainty food amongst starving soldiers in a beleaguered fort.

I do not want art for a few, any more than education for a few, or freedom for a few.

No, rather than art should live this poor thin life among a few exceptional men, despising those beneath them for an ignorance for which they themselves are responsible, for a brutality that they will not struggle with,—rather than this, I would that the world should indeed sweep away all art for awhile, as I said before I thought it possible she might do; rather than the wheat should rot in the miser's granary, I would that the earth had it, that it might yet have a chance to quicken in the dark.

I have a sort of faith, though, that this clearing away of all art will not happen, that men will get wiser, as well as more learned; that many of the intricacies of life, on which we now pride ourselves more than enough, partly because they are new, partly because they have come with the gain of better things, will be cast aside as having played their part, and being useful no longer. I hope that we shall have leisure from war—war commercial, as well as war of the bullet and the bayonet; leisure from the knowledge that darkens counsel; leisure above all from the greed of money, and the craving for that overwhelming distinction that money now brings: I believe that as we have even now partly achieved LIBERTY, so we shall one day achieve EQUALITY, which, and which only, means FRATERNITY, and so have leisure from poverty and all its griping, sordid cares.

Then having leisure from all these things, amidst renewed simplicity of life we shall have leisure to think about our work, that faithful daily companion, which no man any longer will venture to call the Curse of labour: for surely then we shall be happy in it, each in his place, no man grudging at another; no one bidden to be any man's *servant*, every one scorning to be any man's *master:* men will then assuredly

be happy in their work, and that happiness will assuredly bring forth decorative, noble, *popular* art.

That art will make our streets as beautiful as the woods, as elevating as the mountain-sides: it will be a pleasure and a rest, and not a weight upon the spirits to come from the open country into a town; every man's house will be fair and decent, soothing to his mind and helpful to his work: all the works of man that we live amongst and handle will be in harmony with nature, will be reasonable and beautiful: yet all will be simple and inspiriting, not childish nor enervating; for as nothing of beauty and splendour that man's mind and hand may compass shall be wanting from our public buildings, so in no private dwelling will there be any signs of waste, pomp, or insolence, and every man will have his share of the *best.*

It is a dream, you may say, of what has never been and never will be; true, it has never been, and therefore, since the world is alive and moving yet, my hope is the greater that it one day will be: true, it is a dream; but dreams have before now come about of things so good and necessary to us, that we scarcely think of them more than of the daylight, though once people had to live without them, without even the hope of them.

Anyhow, dream as it is, I pray you to pardon my setting it before you, for it lies at the bottom of all my work in the Decorative Arts, nor will it ever be out of my thoughts: and I am here with you to-night to ask you to help me in realizing this dream, this *hope.*

THE ART OF THE PEOPLE. DELIVERED BEFORE THE BIRMINGHAM SOCIETY OF ARTS AND SCHOOL OF DESIGN, FEBRUARY 19, 1879.

"And the men of labour spent their strength in daily struggling for bread to maintain the vital strength they labour with: so living in a daily circulation of sorrow, living but to work, and working but to live, as if daily bread were the only end of a wearisome life, and a wearisome life the only occasion of daily bread."—Daniel Defoe.

I KNOW that a large proportion of those here present are either already practising the Fine Arts, or are being specially educated to that end, and I feel that I may be expected to address myself specially to these. But since it is not to be doubted that we are *all* met together because of the interest we take in what concerns these arts, I would rather address myself to you *all* as representing the public in general. Indeed, those of you who are specially studying Art could learn little of me that would be useful to yourselves only. You are already learning under competent masters—most competent, I am glad to know—by means of a system which should teach you all you need, if you have been right in making the first step of devoting yourselves to Art; I mean if you are aiming at the right thing, and in some way or another understand what Art means, which you may well do without being able to express it, and if you are resolute to follow on the path which that inborn knowledge has shown to you; if it is otherwise with you than this, no system and no teachers will help you to produce real art of any kind, be it never so humble. Those of you who are real artists know well enough all the special advice I can give you, and in how few words it may be said—follow nature, study antiquity, make your own art, and do not steal it, grudge no expense of trouble, patience, or courage, in the striving to accomplish the hard thing you have set yourselves to do. You have had all that said to you twenty times, I doubt not; and twenty times twenty have said it to yourselves, and now I have said

it again to you, and done neither you nor me good nor harm thereby. So true it all is, so well known, and so hard to follow.

But to me, and I hope to you, Art is a very serious thing, and cannot by any means be dissociated from the weighty matters that occupy the thoughts of men; and there are principles underlying the practice of it, on which all serious-minded men, may—nay, must—have their own thoughts. It is on some of these that I ask your leave to speak, and to address myself, not only to those who are consciously interested in the arts, but to all those also who have considered what the progress of civilization promises and threatens to those who shall come after us: what there is to hope and fear for the future of the arts, which were born with the birth of civilization and will only die with its death—what on this side of things, the present time of strife and doubt and change is preparing for the better time, when the change shall have come, the strife be lulled, and the doubt cleared: this is a question, I say, which is indeed weighty, and may well interest all thinking men.

Nay, so universally important is it, that I fear lest you should think I am taking too much upon myself to speak to you on so weighty a matter, nor should I have dared to do so, if I did not feel that I am to-night only the mouthpiece of better men than myself, whose hopes and fears I share; and that being so, I am the more emboldened to speak out, if I can, my full mind on the subject, because I am in a city where, if anywhere, men are not contented to live wholly for themselves and the present, but have fully accepted the duty of keeping their eyes open to whatever new is stirring, so that they may help and be helped by any truth that there may be in it. Nor can I forget, that, since you have done me the great honour of choosing me for the President of your Society of Arts for the past year, and of asking me to speak to you to-night, I should be doing less than my duty if I did not, according to my lights, speak out straightforwardly

whatever seemed to me might be in a small degree useful to you. Indeed, I think I am among friends, who may forgive me if I speak rashly, but scarcely if I speak falsely.

The aim of your Society and School of Arts is, as I understand it, to further those arts by education widely spread. A very great object is that, and well worthy of the reputation of this great city; but since Birmingham has also, I rejoice to know, a great reputation for not allowing things to go about shamming life when the brains are knocked out of them, I think you should know and see clearly what it is you have undertaken to further by these institutions, and whether you really care about it, or only languidly acquiesce in it—whether, in short, you know it to the heart, and are indeed part and parcel of it, with your own will, or against it; or else have heard say that it is a good thing if any one care to meddle with it.

If you are surprised at my putting that question for your consideration, I will tell you why I do so. There are some of us who love Art most, and I may say most faithfully, who see for certain that such love is rare nowadays. We cannot help seeing, that besides a vast number of people, who (poor souls!) are sordid and brutal of mind and habits, and have had no chance or choice in the matter, there are many high-minded, thoughtful, and cultivated men who inwardly think the arts to be a foolish accident of civilization—nay, worse perhaps, a nuisance, a disease, a hindrance to human progress. Some of these, doubtless, are very busy about other sides of thought. They are, as I should put it, so *artistically* engrossed by the study of science, politics, or what not, that they have necessarily narrowed their minds by their hard and praiseworthy labours. But since such men are few, this does not account for a prevalent habit of thought that looks upon Art as at best trifling.

What is wrong, then, with us or the arts, since what was once accounted so glorious, is now deemed paltry?

The question is no light one; for, to put the matter in its clearest light, I will say that the leaders of modern thought

do for the most part sincerely and single-mindedly hate and despise the arts; and you know well that as the leaders are, so must the people be; and that means that we who are met together here for the furthering of Art by wide-spread education are either deceiving ourselves and wasting our time, since we shall one day be of the same opinion as the best men among us, or else we represent a small minority that is right, as minorities sometimes are, while those upright men aforesaid, and the great mass of civilized men, have been blinded by untoward circumstances.

That we are of this mind—the minority that is right—is, I hope, the case. I hope we know assuredly that the arts we have met together to further are necessary to the life of man, if the progress of civilization is not to be as causeless as the turning of a wheel that makes nothing.

How, then, shall we, the minority, carry out the duty which our position thrusts upon us, of striving to grow into a majority?

If we could only explain to those thoughtful men, and the millions of whom they are the flower, what the thing is that we love, which is to us as the bread we eat, and the air we breathe, but about which they know nothing and feel nothing, save a vague instinct of repulsion, then the seed of victory might be sown. This is hard indeed to do; yet if we ponder upon a chapter of ancient or mediæval history, it seems to me some glimmer of a chance of doing so breaks in upon us. Take for example a century of the Byzantine Empire, weary yourselves with reading the names of the pedants, tyrants, and tax-gatherers to whom the terrible chain which long-dead Rome once forged, still gave the power of cheating people into thinking that they were necessary lords of the world. Turn then to the lands they governed, and read and forget a long string of the causeless murders of Northern and Saracen pirates and robbers. That is pretty much the sum of what so-called history has left us of the tale of those days—the stupid languor and the evil deeds of kings and scoundrels. Must we turn away then,

and say that all was evil? How then did men live from day to day? How then did Europe grow into intelligence and freedom? It seems there were others than those of whom history (so called) has left us the names and the deeds. These, the raw material for the treasury and the slave-market, we now call "the people," and we know that they were working all that while. Yes, and that their work was not merely slaves' work, the meal-trough before them and the whip behind them; for though history (so called) has forgotten them, yet their work has not been forgotten, but has made another history—the history of Art. There is not an ancient city in the East or the West that does not bear some token of their grief, and joy, and hope. From Ispahan to Northumberland, there is no building built between the seventh and seventeenth centuries that does not show the influence of the labour of that oppressed and neglected herd of men. No one of them, indeed, rose high above his fellows. There was no Plato, or Shakespeare, or Michael Angelo amongst them. Yet scattered as it was among many men, how strong their thought was, how long it abided, how far it travelled!

And so it was ever through all those days when Art was so vigorous and progressive. Who can say how little we should know of many periods, but for their art? History (so called) has remembered the kings and warriors, because they destroyed; Art has remembered the people, because they created.

I think, then, that this knowledge we have of the life of past times gives us some token of the way we should take in meeting those honest and single-hearted men who above all things desire the world's progress, but whose minds are, as it were, sick on this point of the arts. Surely you may say to them: When all is gained that you (and we) so long for, what shall we do then? That great change which we are working for, each in his own way, will come like other changes, as a thief in the night, and will be with us before we know it; but let us imagine that its consummation has come suddenly and dramatically, acknowledged and hailed

by all right-minded people; and what shall we do then, lest we begin once more to heap up fresh corruption for the woeful labour of ages once again? I say, as we turn away from the flagstaff where the new banner has been just run up; as we depart, our ears yet ringing with the blare of the heralds' trumpets that have proclaimed the new order of things, what shall we turn to then, what *must* we turn to then?

To what else, save to our work, our daily labour?

With what, then, shall we adorn it when we have become wholly free and reasonable? It is necessary toil, but shall it be toil only? Shall all we can do with it be to shorten the hours of that toil to the utmost, that the hours of leisure may be long beyond what men used to hope for? and what then shall we do with the leisure, if we say that all toil is irksome? Shall we sleep it all away?—Yes, and never wake up again, I should hope, in that case.

What shall we do then? what shall our necessary hours of labour bring forth?

That will be a question for all men in that day when many wrongs are righted, and when there will be no classes of degradation on whom the dirty work of the world can be shovelled; and if men's minds are still sick and loathe the arts, they will not be able to answer that question.

Once men sat under grinding tyrannies, amidst violence and fear so great, that nowadays we wonder how they lived through twenty-four hours of it, till we remember that then, as now, their daily labour was the main part of their lives, and that that daily labour was sweetened by the daily creation of Art; and shall we who are delivered from the evils they bore, live drearier days than they did? Shall men, who have come forth from so many tyrannies, bind themselves to yet another one, and become the slaves of nature, piling day upon day of hopeless, useless toil? Must this go on worsening till it comes to this at last—that the world shall have come into its inheritance, and with all foes conquered and nought to bind it, shall choose to sit down and labour for ever amidst grim ugliness? How, then, were all our

hopes cheated, what a gulf of despair should we tumble into then!

In truth, it cannot be; yet if that sickness of repulsion to the arts were to go on hopelessly, nought else would be, and the extinction of the love of beauty and imagination would prove to be the extinction of civilization. But that sickness the world will one day throw off, yet will, I believe, pass through many pains in so doing, some of which will look very like the death-throes of Art, and some, perhaps, will be grievous enough to the poor people of the world; since hard necessity, I doubt, works many of the world's changes, rather than the purblind striving to see, which we call the foresight of man.

Meanwhile, remember that I asked just now, what was amiss in Art or in ourselves that this sickness was upon us. Nothing is wrong or can be with Art in the abstract—that must always be good for mankind, or we are all wrong together: but with Art as we of these latter days have known it, there is much wrong; nay, what are we here for to-night if that is not so? were not the schools of art founded all over the country some thirty years ago because we had found out that popular art was fading—or perhaps had faded out from amongst us?

As to the progress made since then in this country—and in this country only, if at all—it is hard for me to speak without being either ungracious or insincere, and yet speak I must. I say, then, that an apparent external progress in some ways is obvious, but I do not know how far that is hopeful, for time must try it, and prove whether it be a passing fashion or the first token of a real stir among the great mass of civilized men. To speak quite frankly, and as one friend to another, I must needs say that even as I say those words they seem too good to be true. And yet—who knows?—so wont are we to frame history for the future as well as for the past, so often are our eyes blind both when we look backward and when we look forward, because we

have been gazing so intently at our own days, our own lines. May all be better than I think it!

At any rate let us count our gains, and set them against less hopeful signs of the times. In England, then—and as far as I know, in England only—painters of pictures have grown, I believe, more numerous, and certainly more conscientious in their work, and in some cases—and this more especially in England—have developed and expressed a sense of beauty which the world has not seen for the last three hundred years. This is certainly a very great gain, which is not easy to over-estimate, both for those who make the pictures and those who use them.

Furthermore, in England, and in England only, there has been a great improvement in architecture and the arts that attend it—arts which it was the special province of the afore-mentioned schools to revive and foster. This, also, is a considerable gain to the users of the works so made, but I fear a gain less important to most of those concerned in making them.

Against these gains we must, I am very sorry to say, set the fact not easy to be accounted for, that the rest of the civilized world (so called) seems to have done little more than stand still in these matters; and that among ourselves these improvements have concerned comparatively few people, the mass of our population not being in the least touched by them; so that the great bulk of our architecture —the art which most depends on the taste of the people at large—grows worse and worse every day.

I must speak also of another piece of discouragement before I go further. I daresay many of you will remember how emphatically those who first had to do with the movement of which the foundation of our art-schools was a part, called the attention of our pattern-designers to the beautiful works of the East. This was surely most well judged of them, for they bade us look at an art at once beautiful, orderly, living in our own day, and above all, popular. Now,

Hopes and Fears for Art

it is a grievous result of the sickness of civilization that this art is fast disappearing before the advance of western conquest and commerce—fast, and every day faster. While we are met here in Birmingham to further the spread of education in art, Englishmen in India are, in their short-sightedness, actively destroying the very sources of that education—jewellery, metal-work, pottery, calico-printing, brocade-weaving, carpet-making—all the famous and historical arts of the great peninsula have been for long treated as matters of no importance, to be thrust aside for the advantage of any paltry scrap of so-called commerce; and matters are now speedily coming to an end there. I daresay some of you saw the presents which the native Princes gave to the Prince of Wales on the occasion of his progress through India. I did myself, I will not say with great disappointment, for I guessed what they would be like, but with great grief, since there was scarce here and there a piece of goods among these costly gifts, things given as great treasures, which faintly upheld the ancient fame of the cradle of the industrial arts. Nay, in some cases, it would have been laughable, if it had not been so sad, to see the piteous simplicity with which the conquered race had copied the blank vulgarity of their lords. And this deterioration we are now, as I have said, actively engaged in forwarding. I have read a little book,* a handbook to the Indian Court of last year's Paris Exhibition, which takes the occasion of noting the state of manufactures in India one by one. "Art manufactures," you would call them; but, indeed, all manufactures are, or were, "art manufactures" in India. Dr. Birdwood, the author of this book, is of great experience in Indian life, a man of science, and a lover of the arts. His story, by no means a new one to me, or others interested in the East and its labour, is a sad one indeed. The conquered races in their hopelessness are everywhere giving up the genuine practice of their own arts, which we know

* Now incorporated in the "Handbook of Indian Art," by Dr. (now Sir George) Birdwood, published by the Science and Art Department.

ourselves, as we have indeed loudly proclaimed, are founded on the truest and most natural principles. The often-praised perfection of these arts is the blossom of many ages of labour and change, but the conquered races are casting it aside as a thing of no value, so that they may conform themselves to the inferior art, or rather the lack of art, of their conquerors. In some parts of the country the genuine arts are quite destroyed; in many others nearly so; in all they have more or less begun to sicken. So much so is this the case, that now for some time the Government has been furthering this deterioration. As for example, no doubt with the best intentions, and certainly in full sympathy with the general English public, both at home and in India, the Government is now manufacturing cheap Indian carpets in the Indian gaols. I do not say that it is a bad thing to turn out real work, or works of art, in gaols; on the contrary, I think it good if it be properly managed. But in this case, the Government, being, as I said, in full sympathy with the English public, has determined that it will make its wares cheap, whether it make them nasty or not. Cheap and nasty they are, I assure you; but, though they are the worst of their kind, they would not be made thus, if everything did not tend the same way. And it is the same everywhere and with all Indian manufactures, till it has come to this—that these poor people have all but lost the one distinction, the one glory that conquest had left them. Their famous wares, so praised by those who thirty years ago began to attempt the restoration of popular art amongst ourselves, are no longer to be bought at reasonable prices in the common market, but must be sought for and treasured as precious relics for the museums we have founded for our art education. In short, their art is dead, and the commerce of modern civilization has slain it.

The Art of the People

What is going on in India is also going on, more or less, all over the East; but I have spoken of India chiefly because I cannot help thinking that we ourselves are responsible for what is happening there. Chance-hap has made us the lords

of many millions out there; surely, it behoves us to look to it, lest we give to the people whom we have made helpless scorpions for fish and stones for bread.

But since neither on this side, nor on any other, can art be amended, until the countries that lead civilization are themselves in a healthy state about it, let us return to the consideration of its condition among ourselves. And again I say, that obvious as is that surface improvement of the arts within the last few years, I fear too much that there is something wrong about the root of the plant to exult over the bursting of its February buds.

I have just shown you for one thing that lovers of Indian and Eastern Art, including as they do the heads of our institutions for art education, and I am sure many among what are called the governing classes, are utterly powerless to stay its downward course. The general tendency of civilization is against them, and is too strong for them.

Again, though many of us love architecture dearly, and believe that it helps the healthiness both of body and soul to live among beautiful things, we of the big towns are mostly compelled to live in houses which have become a by-word of contempt for their ugliness and inconvenience. The stream of civilization is against us, and we cannot battle against it.

Once more, those devoted men who have upheld the standard of truth and beauty amongst us, and whose pictures, painted amidst difficulties that none but a painter can know, show qualities of mind unsurpassed in any age—these great men have but a narrow circle that can understand their works, and are utterly unknown to the great mass of the people: civilization is so much against them, that they cannot move the people.

Therefore, looking at all this, I cannot think that all is well with the root of the tree we are cultivating. Indeed, I believe that if other things were but to stand still in the world, this improvement before mentioned would lead to a kind of art which, in that impossible case, would be in a way stable, would perhaps stand still also. This would be an art

cultivated professedly by a few, and for a few, who would consider it necessary—a duty, if they could admit duties—to despise the common herd, to hold themselves aloof from all that the world has been struggling for from the first, to guard carefully every approach to their palace of art. It would be a pity to waste many words on the prospect of such a school of art as this, which does in a way, theoretically at least, exist at present, and has for its watchword a piece of slang that does not mean the harmless thing it seems to mean—art for art's sake. Its fore-doomed end must be, that art at last will seem too delicate a thing for even the hands of the initiated to touch; and the initiated must at last sit still and do nothing—to the grief of no one.

Well, certainly, if I thought you were come here to further such an art as this I could not have stood up and called you *friends;* though such a feeble folk as I have told you of one could scarce care to call foes.

Yet, as I say, such men exist, and I have troubled you with speaking of them, because I know that those honest and intelligent people, who are eager for human progress, and yet lack part of the human senses and are anti-artistic, suppose that such men are artists, and that this is what art means, and what it does for people, and that such a narrow, cowardly life is what we, fellow-handicraftsmen, aim at. I see this taken for granted continually, even by many who, to say truth, ought to know better, and I long to put the slur from off us; to make people understand that we, least of all men, wish to widen the gulf between the classes, nay, worse still, to make new classes of elevation, and new classes of degradation—new lords and new slaves; that we, least of all men, want to cultivate the "plant called man" in different ways—here stingily, there wastefully: I wish people to understand that the art we are striving for is a good thing which all can share, which will elevate all; in good sooth, if all people do not soon share it there will soon be none to share; if all are not elevated by it, mankind will lose the elevation it has gained. Nor is such an art as we long for a

vain dream; such an art once was in times that were worse than these, when there was less courage, kindness, and truth in the world than there is now; such an art there will be hereafter, when there will be more courage, kindness, and truth than there is now in the world.

Let us look backward in history once more for a short while, and then steadily forward till my words are done: I began by saying that part of the common and necessary advice given to Art students was to study antiquity; and no doubt many of you, like me, have done so; have wandered, for instance, through the galleries of the admirable museum of South Kensington, and, like me, have been filled with wonder and gratitude at the beauty which has been born from the brain of man. Now, consider, I pray you, what these wonderful works are, and how they were made; and indeed, it is neither in extravagance nor without due meaning that I use the word "wonderful" in speaking of them. Well, these things are just the common household goods of those past days, and that is one reason why they are so few and so carefully treasured. They were common things in their own day, used without fear of breaking or spoiling—no rarities then—and yet we have called them "wonderful."

And how were they made? Did a great artist draw the designs for them—a man of cultivation, highly paid, daintily fed, carefully housed, wrapped up in cotton wool, in short, when he was not at work? By no means. Wonderful as these works are, they were made by "common fellows," as the phrase goes, in the common course of their daily labour. Such were the men we honour in honouring those works. And their labour—do you think it was irksome to them? Those of you who are artists know very well that it was not; that it could not be. Many a grin of pleasure, I'll be bound—and you will not contradict me—went to the carrying through of those mazes of mysterious beauty, to the invention of those strange beasts and birds and flowers that we ourselves have chuckled over at South Kensington. While they were at work, at least, these men were not unhappy,

and I suppose they worked most days, and the most part of the day, as we do.

Or those treasures of architecture that we study so carefully nowadays—what are they? how were they made? There are great minsters among them, indeed, and palaces of kings and lords, but not many; and, noble and awe-inspiring as these may be, they differ only in size from the little grey church that still so often makes the common-place English landscape beautiful, and the little grey house that still, in some parts of the country at least, makes an English village a thing apart, to be seen and pondered on by all who love romance and beauty. These form the mass of our architectural treasures, the houses that everyday people lived in, the unregarded churches in which they worshipped.

And, once more, who was it that designed and ornamented them? The great architect, carefully kept for the purpose, and guarded from the common troubles of common men? By no means. Sometimes, perhaps, it was the monk, the ploughman's brother; oftenest his other brother, the village carpenter, smith, mason, what not—"a common fellow," whose common everyday labour fashioned works that are to-day the wonder and despair of many a hard-working "cultivated" architect. And did he loathe his work? No, it is impossible. I have seen, as we most of us have, work done by such men in some out-of-the-way hamlet—where to-day even few strangers ever come, and whose people seldom go five miles from their own doors; in such places, I say, I have seen work so delicate, so careful, and so inventive, that nothing in its way could go further. And I will assert, without fear of contradiction, that no human ingenuity can produce work such as this without pleasure being a third party to the brain that conceived and the hand that fashioned it. Nor are such works rare. The throne of the great Plantagenet, or the great Valois, was no more daintily carved than the seat of the village mass-john, or the chest of the yeoman's good-wife.

So, you see, there was much going on to make life en-

durable in those times. Not every day, you may be sure, was a day of slaughter and tumult, though the histories read almost as if it were so; but every day the hammer chinked on the anvil, and the chisel played about the oak beam, and never without some beauty and invention being born of it, and consequently some human happiness.

That last word brings me to the very kernel and heart of what I have come here to say to you, and I pray you to think of it most seriously—not as to my words, but as to a thought which is stirring in the world, and will one day grow into something.

That thing which I understand by real art is the expression by man of his pleasure in labour. I do not believe he can be happy in his labour without expressing that happiness; and especially is this so when he is at work at anything in which he specially excels. A most kind gift is this of nature, since all men, nay, it seems all things too, must labour; so that not only does the dog take pleasure in hunting, and the horse in running, and the bird in flying, but so natural does the idea seem to us, that we imagine to ourselves that the earth and the very elements rejoice in doing their appointed work; and the poets have told us of the spring meadows smiling, of the exultation of the fire, of the countless laughter of the sea.

Nor until these latter days has man ever rejected this universal gift, but always, when he has not been too much perplexed, too much bound by disease or beaten down by trouble, has striven to make his work at least happy. Pain he has too often found in his pleasure, and weariness in his rest, to trust to these. What matter if his happiness lie with what must be always with him—his work?

And, once more, shall we, who have gained so much, forego this gain, the earliest, most natural gain of mankind? If we have to a great extent done so, as I verily fear we have, what strange fog-lights must have misled us; or rather let me say, how hard pressed we must have been in the battle

with the evils we have overcome, to have forgotten the greatest of all evils. I cannot call it less than that. If a man has work to do which he despises, which does not satisfy his natural and rightful desire for pleasure, the greater part of his life must pass unhappily and without self-respect. Consider, I beg of you, what that means, and what ruin must come of it in the end.

If I could only persuade you of this, that the chief duty of the civilized world to-day is to set about making labour happy for all, to do its utmost to minimize the amount of unhappy labour—nay, if I could only persuade some two or three of you here present—I should have made a good night's work of it.

Do not, at any rate, shelter yourselves from any misgiving you may have behind the fallacy that the art-lacking labour of to-day is happy work: for the most of men it is not so. It would take long, perhaps, to show you, and make you fully understand that the would-be art which it produces is joyless. But there is another token of its being most unhappy work, which you cannot fail to understand at once—a grievous thing that token is—and I beg of you to believe that I feel the full shame of it, as I stand here speaking of it; but if we do not admit that we are sick, how can we be healed? This hapless token is, that the work done by the civilized world is mostly dishonest work. Look now: I admit that civilization does make certain things well, things which it knows, consciously or unconsciously, are necessary to its present unhealthy condition. These things, to speak shortly, are chiefly machines for carrying on the competition in buying and selling called falsely commerce; and machines for the violent destruction of life—that is to say, materials for two kinds of war; of which kinds the last is no doubt the worst, not so much in itself perhaps, but because on this point the conscience of the world is beginning to be somewhat pricked. But, on the other hand, matters for the carrying on of a dignified daily life, that life of mutual trust, forbearance, and

help, which is the only real life of thinking men—these things the civilized world makes ill, and even increasingly worse and worse.

If I am wrong in saying this, you know well I am only saying what is widely thought, nay widely said too, for that matter. Let me give an instance, familiar enough, of that wide-spread opinion. There is a very clever book of pictures* now being sold at the railway bookstalls, called "The British Working Man, by one who does not believe in him,"—a title and a book which make me both angry and ashamed, because the two express much injustice, and not a little truth in their quaint, and necessarily exaggerated way. It is quite true, and very sad to say, that if any one nowadays wants a piece of ordinary work done by gardener, carpenter, mason, dyer, weaver, smith, what you will, he will be a lucky rarity if he get it well done. He will, on the contrary, meet on every side with evasion of plain duties, and disregard of other men's rights; yet I cannot see how the "British Working Man" is to be made to bear the whole burden of this blame, or indeed the chief part of it. I doubt if it be possible for a whole mass of men to do work to which they are driven, and in which there is no hope and no pleasure, without trying to shirk it—at any rate, shirked it has always been under such circumstances. On the other hand, I know that there are some men so right-minded, that they will, in despite of irksomeness and hopelessness, drive right through their work. Such men are the salt of the earth. But must there not be something wrong with a state of society which drives these into that bitter heroism, and the most part into shirking, into the depths often of half-conscious self-contempt and degradation? Be sure that there is, that the blindness and hurry of civilization as it now is, have to answer a heavy charge as to that enormous amount of pleasureless work—work that tries every muscle of the body and every atom of the brain, and which is done without pleasure and without aim—work which everybody who has to do with tries to

*These were originally published in "Fun."

shuffle off in the speediest way that dread of starvation or ruin will allow him.

I am as sure of one thing as that I am living and breathing, and it is this: that the dishonesty in the daily arts of life, complaints of which are in all men's mouths, and which I can answer for it does exist, is the natural and inevitable result of the world in the hurry of the war of the counting-house, and the war of the battlefield, having forgotten—of all men, I say, each for the other, having forgotten, that pleasure in our daily labour, which nature cries out for as its due.

Therefore, I say again, it is necessary to the further progress of civilization that men should turn their thoughts to some means of limiting, and in the end of doing away with, degrading labour.

I do not think my words hitherto spoken have given you any occasion to think that I mean by this either hard or rough labour; I do not pity men much for their hardships, especially if they be accidental; not necessarily attached to one class or one condition, I mean. Nor do I think (I were crazy or dreaming else) that the work of the world can be carried on without rough labour; but I have seen enough of that to know that it need not be by any means degrading. To plough the earth, to cast the net, to fold the flock—these, and such as these, which are rough occupations enough, and which carry with them many hardships, are good enough for the best of us, certain conditions of leisure, freedom, and due wages being granted. As to the bricklayer, the mason, and the like—these would be artists, and doing not only necessary, but beautiful, and therefore happy work, if art were anything like what it should be. No, it is not such labour as this which we need to do away with, but the toil which makes the thousand and one things which nobody wants, which are used merely as the counters for the competitive buying and selling, falsely called commerce, which I have spoken of before—I know in my heart, and not merely by my reason, that this toil cries out to be done away with. But, besides that, the labour which now makes things good and necessary

in themselves, merely as counters for the commercial war aforesaid, needs regulating and reforming. Nor can this reform be brought about save by art; and if we were only come to our right minds, and could see the necessity for making labour sweet to all men, as it is now to very few—the necessity, I repeat; lest discontent, unrest, and despair should at last swallow up all society—If we, then, with our eyes cleared, could but make some sacrifice of things which do us no good, since we unjustly and uneasily possess them, then indeed I believe we should sow the seeds of a happiness which the world has not yet known, of a rest and content which would make it what I cannot help thinking it was meant to be: and with that seed would be sown also the seed of real art, the expression of man's happiness in his labour—an art made by the people, and for the people, as a happiness to the maker and the user.

That is the only real art there is, the only art which will be an instrument to the progress of the world, and not a hindrance. Nor can I seriously doubt that in your hearts you know that it is so, all of you, at any rate, who have in you an instinct for art. I believe that you agree with me in this, though you may differ from much else that I have said. I think assuredly that this is the art whose welfare we have met together to further, and the necessary instruction in which we have undertaken to spread as widely as may be.

Thus I have told you something of what I think is to be hoped and feared for the future of Art; and if you ask me what I expect as a practical outcome of the admission of these opinions, I must say at once that I know, even if we were all of one mind, and that what I think the right mind on this subject, we should still have much work and many hindrances before us; we should still have need of all the prudence, foresight, and industry of the best among us; and, even so, our path would sometimes seem blind enough. And, to-day, when the opinions which we think right, and which one day will be generally thought so, have to struggle

sorely to make themselves noticed at all, it is early days for us to try to see our exact and clearly mapped road. I suppose you will think it too commonplace of me to say that the general education that makes men think, will one day make them think rightly upon art. Commonplace as it is, I really believe it, and am indeed encouraged by it, when I remember how obviously this age is one of transition from the old to the new, and what a strange confusion, from out of which we shall one day come, our ignorance and half-ignorance is like to make of the exhausted rubbish of the old and the crude rubbish of the new, both of which lie so ready to our hands.

But, if I must say, furthermore, any words that seem like words of practical advice, I think my task is hard, and I fear I shall offend some of you whatever I say; for this is indeed an affair of morality, rather than of what people call art.

However, I cannot forget that, in my mind, it is not possible to dissociate art from morality, politics, and religion. Truth in these great matters of principle is of one, and it is only in formal treatises that it can be split up diversely. I must also ask you to remember how I have already said, that though my mouth alone speaks, it speaks, however feebly and disjointedly, the thoughts of many men better than myself. And further, though when things are tending to the best, we shall still, as aforesaid, need our best men to lead us quite right; yet even now surely, when it is far from that, the least of us can do some yeoman's service to the cause, and live and die not without honour.

So I will say that I believe there are two virtues much needed in modern life, if it is ever to become sweet; and I am quite sure that they are absolutely necessary in the sowing the seed of an *art which is to be made by the people and for the people, as a happiness to the maker and the user.* These virtues are honesty, and simplicity of life. To make my meaning clearer I will name the opposing vice of the second of these—luxury to wit. Also I mean by honesty, the care-

ful and eager giving his due to every man, the determination not to gain by any man's loss, which in my experience is not a common virtue.

But note how the practice of either of these virtues will make the other easier to us. For if our wants are few, we shall have but little chance of being driven by our wants into injustice; and if we are fixed in the principle of giving every man his due, how can our self-respect bear that we should give too much to ourselves?

And in art, and in that preparation for it without which no art that is stable or worthy can be, the raising, namely, of those classes which have heretofore been degraded, the practice of these virtues would make a new world of it. For if you are rich, your simplicity of life will both go towards smoothing over the dreadful contrast between waste and want, which is the great horror of civilized countries, and will also give an example and standard of dignified life to those classes which you desire to raise, who, as it is indeed, being like enough to rich people, are given both to envy and to imitate the idleness and waste that the possession of much money produces.

Nay, and apart from the morality of the matter, which I am forced to speak to you of, let me tell you that though simplicity in art may be costly as well as uncostly, at least it is not wasteful, and nothing is more destructive to art than the want of it. I have never been in any rich man's house which would not have looked the better for having a bonfire made outside of it of nine-tenths of all that it held. Indeed, our sacrifice on the side of luxury will, it seems to me, be little or nothing: for, as far as I can make out, what people usually mean by it, is either a gathering of possessions which are sheer vexations to the owner, or a chain of pompous circumstance, which checks and annoys the rich man at every step. Yes, luxury cannot exist without slavery of some kind or other, and its abolition will be blessed, like the abolition of other slaveries, by the freeing both of the slaves and of their masters.

Lastly, if, besides attaining to simplicity of life, we attain also to the love of justice, then will all things be ready for the new springtime of the arts. For those of us that are employers of labour, how can we bear to give any man less money than he can decently live on, less leisure than his education and self-respect demand? or those of us who are workmen, how can we bear to fail in the contract we have undertaken, or to make it necessary for a foreman to go up and down spying out our mean tricks and evasions? or we the shopkeepers—can we endure to lie about our wares, that we may shuffle off our losses on to some one else's shoulders? or we the public—how can we bear to pay a price for a piece of goods which will help to trouble one man, to ruin another, and starve a third? Or, still more, I think, how can we bear to use, how can we enjoy something which has been a pain and a grief for the maker to make?

And now, I think, I have said what I came to say. I confess that there is nothing new in it, but you know the experience of the world is that a thing must be said over and over again before any great number of men can be got to listen to it. Let my words to-night, therefore, pass for one of the necessary times that the thought in them must be spoken out.

For the rest I believe that, however seriously these words may be gainsayed, I have been speaking to an audience in whom any words spoken from a sense of duty and in hearty good-will, as mine have been, will quicken thought and sow some good seed. At any rate, it is good for a man who thinks seriously to face his fellows, and speak out whatever really burns in him, so that men may seem less strange to one another, and misunderstanding, the fruitful cause of aimless strife, may be avoided.

But if to any of you I have seemed to speak hopelessly, my words have been lacking in art; and you must remember that hopelessness would have locked my mouth, not opened it. I am, indeed, hopeful, but can I give a date to the accomplishment of my hope, and say that it will happen in my life or yours?

But I will say at least, Courage! for things wonderful, unhoped-for, glorious, have happened even in this short while I have been alive.

Yes, surely these times are wonderful and fruitful of change, which, as it wears and gathers new life even in its wearing, will one day bring better things for the toiling days of men, who, with freer hearts and clearer eyes, will once more gain the sense of outward beauty, and rejoice in it.

Meanwhile, if these hours be dark, as, indeed, in many ways they are, at least do not let us sit deedless, like fools and fine gentlemen, thinking the common toil not good enough for us, and beaten by the muddle; but rather let us work like good fellows trying by some dim candle-light to set our workshop ready against to-morrow's daylight—that to-morrow, when the civilized world, no longer greedy, strifeful, and destructive, shall have a new art, a glorious art, made by the people and for the people, as a happiness to the maker and the user.

THE BEAUTY OF LIFE. DELIVERED BEFORE THE BIRMINGHAM SOCIETY OF ARTS AND SCHOOL OF DESIGN, FEBRUARY 19, 1880.

"—propter vitam vivendi perdere causas." Juvenal.

I STAND before you this evening weighted with a disadvantage that I did not feel last year—I have little fresh to tell you; I can somewhat enlarge on what I said then; here and there I may make bold to give you a practical suggestion, or I may put what I have to say in a way which will be clearer to some of you perhaps; but my message is really the same as it was when I first had the pleasure of meeting you.

It is true that if all were going smoothly with art, or at all events so smoothly that there were but a few malcontents in the world, you might listen with some pleasure, and perhaps advantage, to the talk of an old hand in the craft concerning ways of work, the snares that beset success, and the shortest road to it, to a tale of workshop receipts and the like: that would be a pleasant talk surely between friends and fellow-workmen: but it seems to me as if it were not for us as yet; nay, maybe we may live long and find no time fit for such restful talk as the cheerful histories of the hopes and fears of our workshops: anyhow to-night I cannot do it, but must once again call the faithful of art to a battle wider and more distracting than that kindly struggle with nature, to which all true craftsmen are born; which is both the building-up and the wearing-away of their lives.

As I look round on this assemblage, and think of all that it represents, I cannot choose but be moved to the soul by the troubles of the life of civilized man, and the hope that thrusts itself through them; I cannot refrain from giving you once again the message with which, as it seems, some chance-hap has charged me: that message is, in short, to call on you to face the latest danger which civilization is threatened with, a danger of her own breeding: that men in struggling towards the complete attainment of all the luxuries of

life for the strongest portion of their race should deprive their whole race of all the beauty of life: a danger that the strongest and wisest of mankind, in striving to attain to a complete mastery over Nature, should destroy her simplest and widest-spread gifts, and thereby enslave simple people to them, and themselves to themselves, and so at last drag the world into a second barbarism more ignoble, and a thousandfold more hopeless, than the first.

Now of you who are listening to me, there are some, I feel sure, who have received this message, and taken it to heart, and are day by day fighting the battle that it calls on you to fight: to you I can say nothing but that if any word I speak discourage you, I shall heartily wish I had never spoken at all: but to be shown the enemy, and the castle we have got to storm, is not to be bidden to run from him; nor am I telling you to sit down deedless in the desert because between you and the promised land lies many a trouble, and death itself maybe: the hope before you you know, and nothing that I can say can take it away from you; but friend may with advantage cry out to friend in the battle that a stroke is coming from this side or that: take my hasty words in that sense, I beg of you.

But I think there will be others of you in whom vague discontent is stirring: who are oppressed by the life that surrounds you; confused and troubled by that oppression, and not knowing on which side to seek a remedy, though you are fain to do so: well, we, who have gone further into those troubles, believe that we can help you: true we cannot at once take your trouble from you; nay, we may at first rather add to it; but we can tell you what we think of the way out of it; and then amidst the many things you will have to do to set yourselves and others fairly on that way, you will many days, nay most days, forget your trouble in thinking of the good that lies beyond it, for which you are working.

But, again, there are others amongst you (and to speak plainly, I daresay they are the majority), who are not by any means troubled by doubt of the road the world is going, nor

excited by any hope of its bettering that road: to them the cause of civilization is simple and even commonplace: wonder, hope, and fear no longer hang about it; it has become to us like the rising and setting of the sun; it cannot err, and we have no call to meddle with it, either to complain of its course, or to try to direct it.

There is a ground of reason and wisdom in that way of looking at the matter: surely the world will go on its ways, thrust forward by impulses which we cannot understand or sway: but as it grows in strength for the journey, its necessary food is the life and aspirations of *all* of us: and we discontented strugglers with what at times seems the hurrying blindness of civilization, no less than those who see nothing but smooth, unvarying progress in it, are bred of civilization also, and shall be used up to further it in some way or other, I doubt not: and it may be of some service to those who think themselves the only loyal subjects of progress to hear of our existence, since their not hearing of it would not make an end of it: it may set them a-thinking not unprofitably to hear of burdens that they do not help to bear, but which are nevertheless real and weighty enough to some of their fellow-men, who are helping, even as they are, to form the civilization that is to be.

The danger that the present course of civilization will destroy the beauty of life—these are hard words, and I wish I could mend them, but I cannot, while I speak what I believe to be the truth.

That the beauty of life is a thing of no moment, I suppose few people would venture to assert, and yet most civilized people act as if it were of none, and in so doing are wronging both themselves and those that are to come after them; for that beauty, which is what is meant by *art*, using the word in its widest sense, is, I contend, no mere accident to human life, which people can take or leave as they choose, but a positive necessity of life, if we are to live as nature meant us to; that is, unless we are content to be less than men.

Now I ask you, as I have been asking myself this long

while, what proportion of the population in civilized countries has any share at all in that necessity of life?

I say that the answer which must be made to that question justifies my fear that modern civilization is on the road to trample out all the beauty of life, and to make us less than men.

Now if there should be any here who will say: It was always so; there always was a mass of rough ignorance that knew and cared nothing about art; I answer first, that if that be the case, then it was always wrong, and we, as soon as we have become conscious of that wrong, are bound to set it right if we can.

But moreover, strange to say, and in spite of all the suffering that the world has wantonly made for itself, and has in all ages so persistently clung to, as if it were a good and holy thing, this wrong of the mass of men being regardless of art was *not* always so.

So much is now known of the periods of art that have left abundant examples of their work behind them, that we can judge of the art of all periods by comparing these with the remains of times of which less has been left us; and we cannot fail to come to the conclusion that down to very recent days everything that the hand of man touched was more or less beautiful: so that in those days all people who made anything shared in art, as well as all people who used the things so made: that is, *all* people shared in art.

But some people may say: And was that to be wished for? would not this universal spreading of art stop progress in other matters, hinder the work of the world? Would it not make us unmanly? or if not that, would it not be intrusive, and push out other things necessary also for men to study?

Well, I have claimed a necessary place for art, a natural place, and it would be in the very essence of it, that it would apply its own rules of order and fitness to the general ways of life: it seems to me, therefore, that people who are overanxious of the outward expression of beauty becoming too great a force among the other forces of life, would, if they

had had the making of the external world, have been afraid of making an ear of wheat beautiful, lest it should not have been good to eat.

But indeed there seems no chance of art becoming universal, unless on the terms that it shall have little self-consciousness, and for the most part be done with little effort; so that the rough work of the world would be as little hindered by it, as the work of external nature is by the beauty of all her forms and moods: this was the case in the times that I have been speaking of: of art which was made by conscious effort, the result of the individual striving towards perfect expression of their thoughts by men very specially gifted, there was perhaps no more than there is now, except in very wonderful and short periods; though I believe that even for such men the struggle to produce beauty was not so bitter as it now is. But if there were not more great thinkers than there are now, there was a countless multitude of happy workers whose work did express, and could not choose but express, some original thought, and was consequently both interesting and beautiful: now there is certainly no chance of the more individual art becoming common, and either wearying us by its over-abundance, or by noisy self-assertion preventing highly cultivated men taking their due part in the other work of the world; it is too difficult to do: it will be always but the blossom of all the half-conscious work below it, the fulfilment of the shortcomings of less complete minds: but it will waste much of its power, and have much less influence on men's minds, unless it be surrounded by abundance of that commoner work, in which all men once shared, and which, I say, will, when art has really awakened, be done so easily and constantly, that it will stand in no man's way to hinder him from doing what he will, good or evil. And as, on the one hand, I believe that art made by the people and for the people as a joy both to the maker and the user would further progress in other matters rather than hinder it, so also I firmly believe that that higher art produced only by great brains and miraculously gifted hands

cannot exist without it: I believe that the present state of things in which it does exist, while popular art is, let us say, asleep or sick, is a transitional state, which must end at last either in utter defeat or utter victory for the arts.

For whereas all works of craftsmanship were once beautiful, unwittingly or not, they are now divided into two kinds, works of art and non-works of art: now nothing made by man's hand can be indifferent: it must be either beautiful and elevating, or ugly and degrading; and those things that are without art are so aggressively; they wound it by their existence, and they are now so much in the majority that the works of art we are obliged to set ourselves to seek for, whereas the other things are the ordinary companions of our everyday life; so that if those who cultivate art intellectually were inclined never so much to wrap themselves in their special gifts and their high cultivation, and so live happily, apart from other men, and despising them, they could not do so: they are as it were living in an enemy's country; at every turn there is something lying in wait to offend and vex their nicer sense and educated eyes: they must share in the general discomfort—and I am glad of it.

So the matter stands: from the first dawn of history till quite modern times, Art, which Nature meant to solace all, fulfilled its purpose; all men shared in it: that was what made life romantic, as people call it, in those days—that and not robber-barons and inaccessible kings with their hierarchy of serving-nobles and other such rubbish: but art grew and grew, saw empires sicken and sickened with them; grew hale again, and haler, and grew so great at last, that she seemed in good truth to have conquered everything, and laid the material world under foot. Then came a change at a period of the greatest life and hope in many ways that Europe had known till then: a time of so much and such varied hope that people call it the time of the New Birth: as far as the arts are concerned I deny it that title; rather it seems to me that the great men who lived and glorified the practice of art in those days, were the fruit of the old, not

the seed of the new order of things: but a stirring and hopeful time it was, and many things were newborn then which have since brought forth fruit enough: and it is strange and perplexing that from those days forward the lapse of time, which, through plenteous confusion and failure, has on the whole been steadily destroying privilege and exclusiveness in other matters, has delivered up art to be the exclusive privilege of a few, and has taken from the people their birthright; while both wronged and wrongers have been wholly unconscious of what they were doing.

Wholly unconscious—yes, but we are no longer so: there lies the sting of it, and there also the hope.

When the brightness of the so-called Renaissance faded, and it faded very suddenly, a deadly chill fell upon the arts: that New-birth mostly meant looking back to past times, wherein the men of those days thought they saw a perfection of art, which to their minds was different in kind, and not in degree only, from the ruder suggestive art of their own fathers: this perfection they were ambitious to imitate, this alone seemed to be art to them, the rest was childishness: so wonderful was their energy, their success so great, that no doubt to commonplace minds among them, though surely not to the great masters, that perfection seemed to be gained: and, perfection being gained, what are you to do? —you can go no further, you must aim at standing still—which you cannot do.

Art by no means stood still in those latter days of the Renaissance, but took the downward road with terrible swiftness, and tumbled down at the bottom of the hill, where as if bewitched it lay long in great content, believing itself to be the art of Michael Angelo, while it was the art of men whom nobody remembers but those who want to sell their pictures.

Thus it fared with the more individual forms of art. As to the art of the people; in countries and places where the greater art had flourished most, it went step by step on the downward path with that: in more out-of-the-way places,

England for instance, it still felt the influence of the life of its earlier and happy days, and in a way lived on a while; but its life was so feeble, and, so to say, illogical, that it could not resist any change in external circumstances, still less could it give birth to anything new; and before this century began, its last flicker had died out. Still, while it was living, in whatever dotage, it did imply something going on in those matters of daily use that we have been thinking of, and doubtless satisfied some cravings for beauty: and when it was dead, for a long time people did not know it, or what had taken its place, crept so to say into its dead body—that pretence of art, to wit, which is done with machines, though sometimes the machines are called men, and doubtless are so out of working hours: nevertheless long before it was quite dead it had fallen so low that the whole subject was usually treated with the utmost contempt by every one who had any pretence of being a sensible man, and in short the whole civilized world had forgotten that there had ever been an art *made by the people for the people as a joy for the maker and the user.*

But now it seems to me that the very suddenness of the change ought to comfort us, to make us look upon this break in the continuity of the golden chain as an accident only, that itself cannot last: for think how many thousand years it may be since that primæval man graved with a flint splinter on a bone the story of the mammoth he had seen, or told us of the slow uplifting of the heavily-horned heads of the reindeer that he stalked: think I say of the space of time from then till the dimming of the brightness of the Italian Renaissance! whereas from that time till popular art died unnoticed and despised among ourselves is just but two hundred years.

Strange too, that very death is contemporaneous with new-birth of something at all events; for out of all despair sprang a new time of hope lighted by the torch of the French Revolution: and things that have languished with the languishing of art, rose afresh and surely heralded its new birth: in good earnest poetry was born again, and the English

Language, which under the hands of sycophantic verse-makers had been reduced to a miserable jargon, whose meaning, if it have a meaning, cannot be made out without translation, flowed clear, pure, and simple, along with the music of Blake and Coleridge: take those names, the earliest in date among ourselves, as a type of the change that has happened in literature since the time of George II.

With that literature in which romance, that is to say humanity, was re-born, there sprang up also a feeling for the romance of external nature, which is surely strong in us now, joined with a longing to know something real of the lives of those who have gone before us; of these feelings united you will find the broadest expression in the pages of Walter Scott: it is curious as showing how sometimes one art will lag behind another in a revival, that the man who wrote the exquisite and wholly unfettered naturalism of the Heart of Midlothian, for instance, thought himself continually bound to seem to feel ashamed of, and to excuse himself for, his love of Gothic Architecture: he felt that it was romantic, and he knew that it gave him pleasure, but somehow he had not found out that it was art, having been taught in many ways that nothing could be art that was not done by a named man under academical rules.

I need not perhaps dwell much on what of change has been since: you know well that one of the master-arts, the art of painting, has been revolutionized. I have a genuine difficulty in speaking to you of men who are my own personal friends, nay, my masters: still, since I cannot quite say nothing of them I must say the plain truth, which is this: never in the whole history of art did any set of men come nearer to the feat of making something out of nothing than that little knot of painters who have raised English art from what it was when as a boy I used to go to the Royal Academy Exhibition, to what it is now.

It would be ungracious indeed for me who have been so much taught by him that I cannot help feeling continually as I speak that I am echoing his words, to leave out the name

of John Ruskin from an account of what has happened since the tide, as we hope, began to turn in the direction of art. True it is, that his unequalled style of English and his wonderful eloquence would, whatever its subject-matter, have gained him some sort of a hearing in a time that has not lost its relish for literature; but surely the influence that he has exercised over cultivated people must be the result of that style and that eloquence expressing what was already stirring in men's minds; he could not have written what he has done unless people were in some sort ready for it; any more than those painters could have begun their crusade against the dulness and incompetency that was the rule in their art thirty years ago unless they had some hope that they would one day move people to understand them.

Well, we find that the gains since the turning-point of the tide are these: that there are some few artists who have, as it were, caught up the golden chain dropped two hundred years ago, and that there are a few highly cultivated people who can understand them; and that beyond these there is a vague feeling abroad among people of the same degree, of discontent at the ignoble ugliness that surrounds them.

That seems to me to mark the advance that we have made since the last of popular art came to an end amongst us, and I do not say, considering where we then were, that it is not a great advance, for it comes to this, that though the battle is still to win, there are those who are ready for the battle.

Indeed it would be a strange shame for this age if it were not so: for as every age of the world has its own troubles to confuse it, and its own follies to cumber it, so has each its own work to do, pointed out to it by unfailing signs of the times; and it is unmanly and stupid for the children of any age to say: We will not set our hands to the work; we did not make the troubles, we will not weary ourselves seeking a remedy for them: so heaping up for their sons a heavier load than they can lift without such struggles as will wound and cripple them sorely. Not thus our fathers served us, who, working late and early, left us at last that seething mass of

people so terribly alive and energetic, that we call modern Europe; not thus those served us, who have made for us these present days, so fruitful of change and wondering expectation.

The century that is now beginning to draw to an end, if people were to take to nicknaming centuries, would be called the Century of Commerce; and I do not think I undervalue the work that it has done: it has broken down many a prejudice and taught many a lesson that the world has been hitherto slow to learn: it has made it possible for many a man to live free, who would in other times have been a slave, body or soul, or both: if it has not quite spread peace and justice through the world, as at the end of its first half we fondly hoped it would, it has at least stirred up in many fresh cravings for peace and justice: its work has been good and plenteous, but much of it was roughly done, as needs was; recklessness has commonly gone with its energy, blindness too often with its haste: so that perhaps it may be work enough for the next century to repair the blunders of that recklessness, to clear away the rubbish which that hurried work has piled up; nay even we in the second half of its last quarter may do something towards setting its house in order.

You, of this great and famous town, for instance, which has had so much to do with the Century of Commerce, your gains are obvious to all men, but the price you have paid for them is obvious to many—surely to yourselves most of all: I do not say that they are not worth the price; I know that England and the world could very ill afford to exchange the Birmingham of to-day for the Birmingham of the year 1700: but surely if what you have gained be more than a mockery, you cannot stop at those gains, or even go on always piling up similar ones. Nothing can make me believe that the present condition of your Black Country yonder is an unchangeable necessity of your life and position: such miseries as this were begun and carried on in pure thoughtlessness, and a hundredth part of the energy that was spent in creating

them would get rid of them: I do think if we were not all of us too prone to acquiesce in the base byword "after me the deluge," it would soon be something more than an idle dream to hope that your pleasant midland hills and fields might begin to become pleasant again in some way or other, even without depopulating them; or that those once lovely valleys of Yorkshire in the "heavy woollen district," with their sweeping hill-sides and noble rivers, should not need the stroke of ruin to make them once more delightful abodes of men, instead of the dog-holes that the Century of Commerce has made them.

Well, people will not take the trouble or spend the money necessary to beginning this sort of reforms, because they do not feel the evils they live amongst, because they have degraded themselves into something less than men; they are unmanly because they have ceased to have their due share of art.

For again I say that therein rich people have defrauded themselves as well as the poor: you will see a refined and highly educated man nowadays, who has been to Italy and Egypt and where not, who can talk learnedly enough (and fantastically enough sometimes) about art, and who has at his fingers' ends abundant lore concerning the art and literature of past days, sitting down without signs of discomfort in a house, that with all its surroundings is just brutally vulgar and hideous: all his education has not done more for him than that.

The truth is, that in art, and in other things besides, the laboured education of a few will not raise even those few above the reach of the evils that beset the ignorance of the great mass of the population: the brutality of which such a huge stock has been accumulated lower down will often show without much peeling through the selfish refinement of those who have let it accumulate. The lack of art, or rather the murder of art, that curses our streets from the sordidness of the surroundings of the lower classes, has its exact counterpart in the dulness and vulgarity of those of the middle

classes, and the double-distilled dulness, and scarcely less vulgarity of those of the upper classes.

I say this is as it should be; it is just and fair as far as it goes; and moreover the rich with their leisure are the more like to move if they feel the pinch themselves.

But how shall they and we, and all of us, move? What is the remedy?

What remedy can there be for the blunders of civilization but further civilization? You do not by any accident think that we have gone as far in that direction as it is possible to go, do you?—even in England, I mean?

When some changes have come to pass, that perhaps will be speedier than most people think, doubtless education will both grow in quality and in quantity; so that it may be, that as the nineteenth century is to be called the Century of Commerce, the twentieth may be called the Century of Education. But that education does not end when people leave school is now a mere commonplace; and how then can you really educate men who lead the life of machines, who only think for the few hours during which they are not at work, who in short spend almost their whole lives in doing work which is not proper for developing them body and mind in some worthy way? You cannot educate, you cannot civilize men, unless you can give them a share in art.

Yes, and it is hard indeed as things go to give most men that share; for they do not miss it, or ask for it, and it is impossible as things are that they should either miss or ask for it. Nevertheless everything has a beginning, and many great things have had very small ones; and since, as I have said, these ideas are already abroad in more than one form, we must not be too much discouraged at the seemingly boundless weight we have to lift.

After all, we are only bound to play our own parts, and do our own share of the lifting; and as in no case that share can be great, so also in all cases it is called for, it is necessary. Therefore let us work and faint not; remembering that though it be natural, and therefore excusable, amidst doubt-

ful times to feel doubts of success oppress us at whiles, yet not to crush those doubts, and work as if we had them not, is simple cowardice, which is unforgivable. No man has any right to say that all has been done for nothing, that all the faithful unwearying strife of those that have gone before us shall lead us nowhither; that mankind will but go round and round in a circle for ever: no man has a right to say that, and then get up morning after morning to eat his victuals and sleep a-nights, all the while making other people toil to keep his worthless life a-going.

Be sure that some way or other will be found out of the tangle, even when things seem most tangled, and be no less sure that some use will then have come of our work, if it has been faithful, and therefore unsparingly careful and thoughtful.

So once more I say, if in any matters civilization has gone astray, the remedy lies not in standing still, but in more complete civilization.

Now whatever discussion there may be about that often used and often misused word, I believe all who hear me will agree with me in believing from their hearts, and not merely in saying in conventional phrase, that the civilization which does not carry the whole people with it is doomed to fall, and give place to one which at least aims at doing so.

We talk of the civilization of the ancient peoples, of the classical times: well, civilized they were no doubt, some of their folk at least: an Athenian citizen for instance led a simple, dignified, almost perfect life; but there were drawbacks to happiness perhaps in the lives of his slaves: and the civilization of the ancients was founded on slavery.

Indeed that ancient society did give a model to the world, and showed us for ever what blessings are freedom of life and thought, self-restraint and a generous education: all those blessings the ancient free peoples set forth to the world—and kept them to themselves.

Therefore no tyrant was too base, no pretext too hollow, for enslaving the grandsons of the men of Salamis and

Thermopylæ: therefore did the descendants of those stern and self-restrained Romans, who were ready to give up everything, and life as the least of things, to the glory of their commonweal, produce monsters of license and reckless folly. Therefore did a little knot of Galilean peasants overthrow the Roman Empire.

Ancient civilization was chained to slavery and exclusiveness, and it fell; the barbarism that took its place has delivered us from slavery and grown into modern civilization; and that in its turn has before it the choice of never-ceasing growth, or destruction by that which has in it the seeds of higher growth.

There is an ugly word for a dreadful fact, which I must make bold to use—the residuum: that word since the time I first saw it used, has had a terrible significance to me, and I have felt from my heart that if this residuum were a necessary part of modern civilization, as some people openly, and many more tacitly, assume that it is, then this civilization carries with it the poison that shall one day destroy it, even as its elder sister did: if civilization is to go no further than this, it had better not have gone so far: if it does not aim at getting rid of this misery and giving some share in the happiness and dignity of life to *all* the people that it has created, and which it spends such unwearying energy in creating, it is simply an organized injustice, a mere instrument for oppression, so much the worse than that which has gone before it, as its pretensions are higher, its slavery subtler, its mastery harder to overthrow, because supported by such a dense mass of commonplace well-being and comfort.

Surely this cannot be: surely there is a distinct feeling abroad of this injustice: so that if the residuum still clogs all the efforts of modern civilization to rise above mere population-breeding and money-making, the difficulty of dealing with it is the legacy, first of the ages of violence and almost conscious brutal injustice, and next of the ages of thoughtlessness, of hurry and blindness; surely all those

who think at all of the future of the world are at work in one way or other in striving to rid it of this shame.

That to my mind is the meaning of what we call National Education, which we have begun, and which is doubtless already bearing its fruits, and will bear greater, when all people are educated, not according to the money which they or their parents possess, but according to the capacity of their minds.

What effect that will have upon the future of the arts I cannot say, but one would surely think a very great effect; for it will enable people to see clearly many things which are now as completely hidden from them as if they were blind in body and idiotic in mind: and this, I say, will act not only upon those who most directly feel the evils of ignorance, but also upon those who feel them indirectly—upon us, the educated: the great wave of rising intelligence, rife with so many natural desires and aspirations, will carry all classes along with it, and force us all to see that many things which we have been used to look upon as necessary and eternal evils are merely the accidental and temporary growths of past stupidity, and can be escaped from by due effort and the exercise of courage, goodwill, and forethought.

And among those evils, I do, and must always, believe will fall that one which last year I told you that I accounted the greatest of all evils, the heaviest of all slaveries; that evil of the greater part of the population being engaged for by far the most part of their lives in work, which at the best cannot interest them, or develop their best faculties, and at the worst (and that is the commonest, too) is mere unmitigated slavish toil, only to be wrung out of them by the sternest compulsion, a toil which they shirk all they can—small blame to them. And this toil degrades them into less than men: and they will some day come to know it, and cry out to be made men again, and art only can do it, and redeem them from this slavery; and I say once more that this is her highest and most glorious end and aim; and it is in her

struggle to attain to it that she will most surely purify herself, and quicken her own aspirations towards perfection.

But we—in the meantime we must not sit waiting for obvious signs of these later and glorious days to show themselves on earth, and in the heavens, but rather turn to the commonplace, and maybe often dull work of fitting ourselves in detail to take part in them if we should live to see one of them; or in doing our best to make the path smooth for their coming, if we are to die before they are here.

What, therefore, can we do, to guard traditions of time past that we may not one day have to begin anew from the beginning with none to teach us? What are we to do, that we may take heed to, and spread the decencies of life, so that at the least we may have a field where it will be possible for art to grow when men begin to long for it: what finally can we do, each of us, to cherish some germ of art, so that it may meet with others, and spread and grow little by little into the thing that we need?

Now I cannot pretend to think that the first of these duties is a matter of indifference to you, after my experience of the enthusiastic meeting that I had the honour of addressing here last autumn on the subject of the (so called) restoration of St. Mark's at Venice; you thought, and most justly thought, it seems to me, that the subject was of such moment to art in general, that it was a simple and obvious thing for men who were anxious on the matter to address themselves to those who had the decision of it in their hands; even though the former were called Englishmen, and the latter Italians; for you felt that the name of lovers of art would cover those differences: if you had any misgivings, you remembered that there was but one such building in the world, and that it was worth while risking a breach of etiquette, if any words of ours could do anything towards saving it; well, the Italians were, some of them, very naturally, though surely unreasonably, irritated, for a time, and in some of their prints they bade us look at home; that was

no argument in favour of the wisdom of wantonly rebuilding St. Mark's façade: but certainly those of us who have not yet looked at home in this matter had better do so speedily, late and over late though it be: for though we have no golden-pictured interiors like St. Mark's Church at home, we still have many buildings which are both works of ancient art and monuments of history: and just think what is happening to them, and note, since we profess to recognize their value, how helpless art is in the Century of Commerce!

In the first place, many and many a beautiful and ancient building is being destroyed all over civilized Europe as well as in England, because it is supposed to interfere with the convenience of the citizens, while a little forethought might save it without trenching on that convenience;* but even apart from that, I say that if we are not prepared to put up with a little inconvenience in our lifetimes for the sake of preserving a monument of art which will elevate and educate, not only ourselves, but our sons, and our sons' sons, it is vain and idle of us to talk about art—or education either. Brutality must be bred of such brutality.

The same thing may be said about enlarging, or otherwise altering for convenience' sake, old buildings still in use for something like their original purposes: in almost all such cases it is really nothing more than a question of a little money for a new site: and then a new building can be built exactly fitted for the uses it is needed for, with such art about it as our own days can furnish; while the old monument is left to tell its tale of change and progress, to hold

* As I corrected these sheets for the press, the case of two such pieces of destruction is forced upon me: first, the remains of the Refectory of Westminster Abbey, with the adjacent Ashburnham House, a beautiful work, probably by Inigo Jones; and second, Magdalen Bridge at Oxford. Certainly this seems to mock my hope of the influence of education on the Beauty of Life; since the first scheme of destruction is eagerly pressed forward by the authorities of Westminster School, the second scarcely opposed by the resident members of the University of Oxford.

out example and warning to us in the practice of the arts: and thus the convenience of the public, the progress of modern art, and the cause of education, are all furthered at once at the cost of a little money.

Surely if it be worth while troubling ourselves about the works of art of to-day, of which any amount almost can be done, since we are yet alive, it is worth while spending a little care, forethought, and money in preserving the art of bygone ages, of which (woe worth the while!) so little is left, and of which we can never have any more, whatever good-hap the world may attain to.

No man who consents to the destruction or the mutilation of an ancient building has any right to pretend that he cares about art; or has any excuse to plead in defence of his crime against civilization and progress, save sheer brutal ignorance.

But before I leave this subject I must say a word or two about the curious invention of our own days called Restoration, a method of dealing with works of bygone days which, though not so degrading in its spirit as downright destruction, is nevertheless little better in its results on the condition of those works of art; it is obvious that I have no time to argue the question out to-night, so I will only make these assertions:

That ancient buildings, being both works of art and monuments of history, must obviously be treated with great care and delicacy: that the imitative art of to-day is not, and cannot be the same thing as ancient art, and cannot replace it; and that therefore if we superimpose this work on the old, we destroy it both as art and as a record of history: lastly, that the natural weathering of the surface of a building is beautiful, and its loss disastrous.

Now the restorers hold the exact contrary of all this: they think that any clever architect to-day can deal off-hand successfully with the ancient work; that while all things else have changed about us since (say) the thirteenth century, art has not changed, and that our workmen can turn out work

identical with that of the thirteenth century; and, lastly, that the weather-beaten surface of an ancient building is worthless, and to be got rid of wherever possible.

You see the question is difficult to argue, because there seem to be no common grounds between the restorers and the anti-restorers: I appeal therefore to the public, and bid them note, that though our opinions may be wrong, the action we advise is not rash: let the question be shelved awhile: if, as we are always pressing on people, due care be taken of these monuments, so that they shall not fall into disrepair, they will be always there to "restore" whenever people think proper and when we are proved wrong; but if it should turn out that we are right, how can the "restored" buildings be restored? I beg of you therefore to let the question be shelved, till art has so advanced among us, that we can deal authoritatively with it, till there is no longer any doubt about the matter.

Surely these monuments of our art and history, which, whatever the lawyers may say, belong not to a coterie, or to a rich man here and there, but to the nation at large, are worth this delay: surely the last relics of the life of the "famous men and our fathers that begat us" may justly claim of us the exercise of a little patience.

It will give us trouble no doubt, all this care of our possessions: but there is more trouble to come; for I must now speak of something else, of possessions which should be common to all of us, of the green grass, and the leaves, and the waters, of the very light and air of heaven, which the Century of Commerce has been too busy to pay any heed to. And first let me remind you that I am supposing every one here present professes to care about art.

Well, there are some rich men among us whom we oddly enough call manufacturers, by which we mean capitalists who pay other men to organize manufacturers; these gentlemen, many of whom buy pictures and profess to care about art, burn a deal of coal: there is an Act in existence which

was passed to prevent them sometimes and in some places from pouring a dense cloud of smoke over the world, and, to my thinking, a very lame and partial Act it is: but nothing hinders these lovers of art from being a law to themselves, and making it a point of honour with them to minimize the smoke nuisance as far as their own works are concerned; and if they don't do so, when mere money, and even a very little of that, is what it will cost them, I say that their love of art is a mere pretence: how can you care about the image of a landscape when you show by your deeds that you don't care for the landscape itself? or what right have you to shut yourself up with beautiful form and colour when you make it impossible for other people to have any share in these things?

Well, and as to the Smoke Act itself: I don't know what heed you pay to it in Birmingham,* but I have seen myself what heed is paid to it in other places; Bradford for instance: though close by them at Saltaire they have an example which I should have thought might have shamed them; for the huge chimney there which serves the acres of weaving and spinning sheds of Sir Titus Salt and his brothers is as guiltless of smoke as an ordinary kitchen chimney. Or Manchester: a gentleman of that city told me that the Smoke Act was a mere dead letter there: well, they buy pictures in Manchester and profess to wish to further the arts: but you see it must be idle pretence as far as their rich people are concerned: they only want to talk about it, and have themselves talked of.

I don't know what you are doing about this matter here; but you must forgive my saying, that unless you are beginning to think of some way of dealing with it, you are not beginning yet to pave your way to success in the arts.

* Since perhaps some people may read these words who are not of Birmingham, I ought to say that it was authoritatively explained at the meeting to which I addressed these words, that in Birmingham the law is strictly enforced.

Well, I have spoken of a huge nuisance, which is a type of the worst nuisances of what an ill-tempered man might be excused for calling the Century of Nuisances, rather than the Century of Commerce. I will now leave it to the consciences of the rich and influential among us, and speak of a minor nuisance which it is in the power of every one of us to abate, and which, small as it is, is so vexatious, that if I can prevail on a score of you to take heed to it by what I am saying, I shall think my evening's work a good one. Sandwich-papers I mean—of course you laugh: but come now, don't you, civilized as you are in Birmingham, leave them all about the Lickey hills and your public gardens and the like? If you don't I really scarcely know with what words to praise you. When we Londoners go to enjoy ourselves at Hampton Court, for instance, we take special good care to let everybody know that we have had something to eat: so that the park just outside the gates (and a beautiful place it is) looks as if it had been snowing dirty paper. I really think you might promise me one and all who are here present to have done with this sluttish habit, which is the type of many another in its way, just as the smoke nuisance is. I mean such things as scrawling one's name on monuments, tearing down tree boughs, and the like.

I suppose 'tis early days in the revival of the arts to express one's disgust at the daily increasing hideousness of the posters with which all our towns are daubed. Still we ought to be disgusted at such horrors, and I think make up our minds never to buy any of the articles so advertised. I can't believe they can be worth much if they need all that shouting to sell them.

Again, I must ask what do you do with the trees on a site that is going to be built over? do you try to save them, to adapt your houses at all to them? do you understand what treasures they are in a town or a suburb? or what a relief they will be to the hideous dog-holes which (forgive me!) you are probably going to build in their places? I ask this anxiously, and with grief in my soul, for in London and its

suburbs we always* begin by clearing a site till it is as bare as the pavement: I really think that almost anybody would have been shocked, if I could have shown him some of the trees that have been wantonly murdered in the suburb in which I live (Hammersmith to wit), amongst them some of those magnificent cedars, for which we along the river used to be famous once.

But here again see how helpless those are who care about art or nature amidst the hurry of the Century of Commerce.

Pray do not forget, that any one who cuts down a tree wantonly or carelessly, especially in a great town or its suburbs, need make no pretence of caring about art.

What else can we do to help to educate ourselves and others in the path of art, to be on the road to attaining an *Art made by the people and for the people as a joy to the maker and the user?*

Why, having got to understand something of what art was, having got to look upon its ancient monuments as friends that can tell us something of times bygone, and whose faces we do not wish to alter, even though they be worn by time and grief: having got to spend money and trouble upon matters of decency, great and little; having made it clear that we really do care about nature even in the suburbs of a big town—having got so far, we shall begin to think of the houses in which we live.

For I must tell you that unless you are resolved to have good and rational architecture, it is, once again, useless your thinking about art at all.

I have spoken of the popular arts, but they might all be summed up in that one word Architecture; they are all parts of that great whole, and the art of house-building begins it all: if we did not know how to dye or to weave; if we had neither gold, nor silver, nor silk; and no pigments to paint

* Not *quite* always: in the little colony at Bedford Park, Chiswick, as many trees have been left as possible, to the boundless advantage of its quaint and pretty architecture.

with, but half-a-dozen ochres and umbers, we might yet frame a worthy art that would lead to everything, if we had but timber, stone, and lime, and a few cutting tools to make these common things not only shelter us from wind and weather, but also express the thoughts and aspirations that stir in us.

Architecture would lead us to all the arts, as it did with earlier men: but if we despise it and take no note of how we are housed, the other arts will have a hard time of it indeed.

Now I do not think the greatest of optimists would deny that, taking us one and all, we are at present housed in a perfectly shameful way, and since the greatest part of us have to live in houses already built for us, it must be admitted that it is rather hard to know what to do, beyond waiting till they tumble about our ears.

Only we must not lay the fault upon the builders, as some people seem inclined to do: they are our very humble servants, and will build what we ask for; remember, that rich men are not obliged to live in ugly houses, and yet you see they do; which the builders may be well excused for taking as a sign of what is wanted.

Well, the point is, we must do what we can, and make people understand what we want them to do for us, by letting them see what we do for ourselves.

Hitherto, judging us by that standard, the builders may well say, that we want the pretence of a thing rather than the thing itself; that we want a show of petty luxury if we are unrich, a show of insulting stupidity if we are rich: and they are quite clear that as a rule we want to get something that shall look as if it cost twice as much as it really did.

You cannot have Architecture on those terms: simplicity and solidity are the very first requisites of it: just think if it is not so: How we please ourselves with an old building by thinking of all the generations of men that have passed through it! do we not remember how it has received their joy, and borne their sorrow, and not even their folly has left sourness upon it? it still looks as kind to us as it did to them.

And the converse of this we ought to feel when we look at a newly-built house if it were as it should be: we should feel a pleasure in thinking how he who had built it had left a piece of his soul behind him to greet the new-comers one after another long and long after he was gone:—but what sentiment can an ordinary modern house move in us, or what thought —save a hope that we may speedily forget its base ugliness?

But if you ask me how we are to pay for this solidity and extra expense, that seems to me a reasonable question; for you must dismiss at once as a delusion the hope that has been sometimes cherished, that you can have a building which is a work of art, and is therefore above all things properly built, at the same price as a building which only pretends to be this: never forget when people talk about cheap art in general, by the way, that all art costs time, trouble, and thought, and that money is only a counter to represent these things.

However, I must try to answer the question I have supposed put, how are we to pay for decent houses?

It seems to me that, by a great piece of good luck, the way to pay for them is by doing that which alone can produce popular art among us: living a simple life, I mean. Once more I say that the greatest foe to art is luxury, art cannot live in its atmosphere.

When you hear of the luxuries of the ancients, you must remember that they were not like our luxuries, they were rather indulgence in pieces of extravagant folly than what we to-day call luxury; which perhaps you would rather call comfort: well, I accept the word, and say that a Greek or Roman of the luxurious time would stare astonished could he be brought back again and shown the comforts of a well-to-do middle-class house.

But some, I know, think that the attainment of these very comforts is what makes the difference between civilization and uncivilization, that they are the essence of civilization. Is it so indeed? Farewell my hope then!—I had thought that civilization meant the attainment of peace and order and freedom, of goodwill between man and man, of the love of

truth and the hatred of injustice, and by consequence the attainment of the good life which these things breed, a life free from craven fear, but full of incident: that was what I thought it meant, not more stuffed chairs and more cushions, and more carpets and gas, and more dainty meat and drink—and therewithal more and sharper differences between class and class.

If that be what it is, I for my part wish I were well out of it, and living in a tent in the Persian desert, or a turf hut on the Iceland hill-side. But however it be, and I think my view is the true view, I tell you that art abhors that side of civilization, she cannot breathe in the houses that lie under its stuffy slavery.

Believe me, if we want art to begin at home, as it must, we must clear our houses of troublesome superfluities that are for ever in our way: conventional comforts that are no real comforts, and do but make work for servants and doctors: if you want a golden rule that will fit everybody, this is it:

Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.

And if we apply that rule strictly, we shall in the first place show the builders and such-like servants of the public what we really want, we shall create a demand for real art, as the phrase goes; and in the second place, we shall surely have more money to pay for decent houses.

Perhaps it will not try your patience too much if I lay before you my idea of the fittings necessary to the sitting-room of a healthy person: a room, I mean, which he would not have to cook in much, or sleep in generally, or in which he would not have to do any very litter-making manual work.

First a book-case with a great many books in it: next a table that will keep steady when you write or work at it: then several chairs that you can move, and a bench that you can sit or lie upon: next a cupboard with drawers: next, unless either the book-case or the cupboard be very beautiful with painting or carving, you will want pictures or engravings, such as you can afford, only not stopgaps, but real works of

art on the wall; or else the wall itself must be ornamented with some beautiful and restful pattern: we shall also want a vase or two to put flowers in, which latter you must have sometimes, especially if you live in a town. Then there will be the fireplace of course, which in our climate is bound to be the chief object in the room.

That is all we shall want, especially if the floor be good; if it be not, as, by the way, in a modern house it is pretty certain not to be, I admit that a small carpet which can be bundled out of the room in two minutes will be useful, and we must also take care that it is beautiful, or it will annoy us terribly.

Now unless we are musical, and need a piano (in which case, as far as beauty is concerned, we are in a bad way), that is quite all we want: and we can add very little to these necessaries without troubling ourselves and hindering our work, our thought, and our rest.

If these things were done at the least cost for which they could be done well and solidly, they ought not to cost much; and they are so few, that those that could afford to have them at all, could afford to spend some trouble to get them fitting and beautiful: and all those who care about art ought to take great trouble to do so, and to take care that there be no sham art amongst them, nothing that it has degraded a man to make or sell. And I feel sure, that if all who care about art were to take this pains, it would make a great impression upon the public.

This simplicity you may make as costly as you please or can, on the other hand: you may hang your walls with tapestry instead of whitewash or paper; or you may cover them with mosaic, or have them frescoed by a great painter: all this is not luxury, if it be done for beauty's sake, and not for show: it does not break our golden rule: *Have nothing in your houses which you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful.*

All art starts from this simplicity; and the higher the art rises, the greater the simplicity. I have been speaking of the

fittings of a dwelling-house—a place in which we eat and drink, and pass familiar hours; but when you come to places which people want to make more specially beautiful because of the solemnity or dignity of their uses, they will be simpler still, and have little in them save the bare walls made as beautiful as may be. St. Mark's at Venice has very little furniture in it, much less than most Roman Catholic churches: its lovely and stately mother St. Sophia of Constantinople had less still, even when it was a Christian church: but we need not go either to Venice or Stamboul to take note of that: go into one of our own mighty Gothic naves (do any of you remember the first time you did so?) and note how the huge free space satisfies and elevates you, even now when window and wall are stripped of ornament: then think of the meaning of simplicity and absence of encumbering gewgaws.

Now after all, for us who are learning art, it is not far to seek what is the surest way to further it; that which most breeds art is art; every piece of work that we do which is well done, is so much help to the cause; every piece of pretence and half-heartedness is so much hurt to it. Most of you who take to the practice of art can find out in no very long time whether you have any gifts for it or not: if you have not, throw the thing up, or you will have a wretched time of it yourselves, and will be damaging the cause by laborious pretence: but if you have gifts of any kind, you are happy indeed beyond most men; for your pleasure is always with you, nor can you be intemperate in the enjoyment of it, and as you use it, it does not lessen, but grows: if you are by chance weary of it at night, you get up in the morning eager for it; or if perhaps in the morning it seems folly to you for a while, yet presently, when your hand has been moving a little in its wonted way, fresh hope has sprung up beneath it and you are happy again. While others are getting through the day like plants thrust into the earth, which cannot turn this way or that but as the wind blows them, you know what you want, and your will is on the alert to find it, and you,

whatever happens, whether it be joy or grief, are at least alive.

Now when I spoke to you last year, after I had sat down I was half afraid that I had on some points said too much, that I had spoken too bitterly in my eagerness; that a rash word might have discouraged some of you; I was very far from meaning that: what I wanted to do, what I want to do to-night is to put definitely before you a cause for which to strive.

That cause is the Democracy of Art, the ennobling of daily and common work, which will one day put hope and pleasure in the place of fear and pain, as the forces which move men to labour and keep the world a-going.

If I have enlisted any one in that cause, rash as my words may have been, or feeble as they may have been, they have done more good than harm; nor do I believe that any words of mine can discourage any who have joined that cause or are ready to do so: their way is too clear before them for that, and every one of us can help the cause whether he be great or little.

I know indeed that men, wearied by the pettiness of the details of the strife, their patience tried by hope deferred, will at whiles, excusably enough, turn back in their hearts to other days, when if the issues were not clearer, the means of trying them were simpler; when, so stirring were the times, one might even have atoned for many a blunder and backsliding by visibly dying for the cause. To have breasted the Spanish pikes at Leyden, to have drawn sword with Oliver: that may well seem to us at times amidst the tangles of to-day a happy fate: for a man to be able to say, I have lived like a fool, but now I will cast away fooling for an hour, and die like a man—there is something in that certainly: and yet 'tis clear that few men can be so lucky as to die for a cause, without having first of all lived for it. And as this is the most that can be asked from the greatest man that follows a cause, so it is the least that can be taken from the smallest.

So to us who have a Cause at heart, our highest ambition

and our simplest duty are one and the same thing: for the most part we shall be too busy doing the work that lies ready to our hands, to let impatience for visibly great progress vex us much; but surely since we are servants of a Cause, hope must be ever with us, and sometimes perhaps it will so quicken our vision that it will outrun the slow lapse of time, and show us the victorious days when millions of those who now sit in darkness will be enlightened by an *Art made by the people and for the people, a joy to the maker and the user.*

MAKING THE BEST OF IT.* A PAPER READ BEFORE THE TRADES' GUILD OF LEARNING AND THE BIRMINGHAM SOCIETY OF ARTISTS.

I HAVE to-night to talk to you about certain things which my experience in my own craft has led me to notice, and which have bred in my mind something like a set of rules or maxims, which guide my practice. Every one who has followed a craft for long has such rules in his mind, and cannot help following them himself, and insisting on them practically in dealing with his pupils or workmen if he is in any degree a master; and when these rules, or if you will, impulses, are filling the minds and guiding the hands of many craftsmen at one time, they are busy forming a distinct school, and the art they represent is sure to be at least alive, however rude, timid, or lacking it may be; and the more imperious these rules are, the wider these impulses are spread, the more vigorously alive will be the art they produce; whereas in times when they are felt but lightly and rarely, when one man's maxims seem absurd or trivial to his brother craftsman, art is either sick or slumbering, or so thinly scattered amongst the great mass of men as to influence the general life of the world little or nothing.

For though this kind of rules of a craft may seem to some arbitrary, I think that it is because they are the result of such intricate combinations of circumstances, that only a great philosopher, if even he, could express in words the sources of them, and give us reasons for them all, and we who are craftsmen must be content to prove them in practice, believing that their roots are founded in human nature, even as we know that their first-fruits are to be found in that most wonderful of all histories, the history of the arts.

Will you, therefore, look upon me as a craftsman who shares certain impulses with many others, which impulses forbid him to question the rules they have forced on him?

* Written in or before 1879.—Ed.

so looking on me you may afford perhaps to be more indulgent to me if I seem to dogmatize over much.

Yet I cannot claim to represent any one craft. The division of labour, which has played so great a part in furthering competitive commerce, till it has become a machine with powers both reproductive and destructive, which few dare to resist, and none can control or foresee the result of, has pressed specially hard on that part of the field of human culture in which I was born to labour. That field of the arts, whose harvest should be the chief part of human joy, hope, and consolation, has been, I say, dealt hardly with by the division of labour, once the servant, and now the master of competitive commerce, itself once the servant, and now the master of civilization; nay, so searching has been this tyranny, that it has not passed by my own insignificant corner of labour, but as it has thwarted me in many ways, so chiefly perhaps in this, that it has so stood in the way of my getting the help from others which my art forces me to crave, that I have been compelled to learn many crafts, and belike, according to the proverb, forbidden to master any, so that I fear my lecture will seem to you both to run over too many things and not to go deep enough into any.

I cannot help it. That above-mentioned tyranny has turned some of us from being, as we should be, contented craftsmen, into being discontented agitators against it, so that our minds are not at rest, even when we have to talk over workshop receipts and maxims; indeed I must confess that I should hold my peace on all matters connected with the arts, if I had not a lurking hope to stir up both others and myself to discontent with and rebellion against things as they are, clinging to the further hope that our discontent may be fruitful and our rebellion steadfast, at least to the end of our own lives, since we believe that we are rebels not against the laws of Nature, but the customs of folly.

Nevertheless, since even rebels desire to live, and since even they must sometimes crave for rest and peace—nay, since they must, as it were, make for themselves strongholds

from whence to carry on the strife—we ought not to be accused of inconsistency, if to-night we consider how to make the best of it. By what forethought, pains, and patience, can we make endurable those strange dwellings—the basest, the ugliest, and the most inconvenient that men have ever built for themselves, and which our own haste, necessity, and stupidity, compel almost all of us to live in? That is our present question. Making the best of it

In dealing with this subject, I shall perforce be chiefly speaking of those middle-class dwellings of which I know most; but what I have to say will be as applicable to any other kind; for there is no dignity or unity of plan about any modern house, big or little. It has neither centre nor individuality, but is invariably a congeries of rooms tumbled together by chance hap. So that the unit I have to speak of is a room rather than a house.

Now there may be some here who have the good luck to dwell in those noble buildings which our forefathers built, out of their very souls, one may say; such good luck I call about the greatest that can befall a man in these days. But these happy people have little to do with our troubles of to-night, save as sympathetic onlookers. All we have to do with them is to remind them not to forget their duties to those places, which they doubtless love well; not to alter them or torment them to suit any passing whim or convenience, but to deal with them as if their builders, to whom they owe so much, could still be wounded by the griefs and rejoice in the well-doing of their ancient homes. Surely if they do this, they also will neither be forgotten nor unthanked in the time to come.

There may be others here who dwell in houses that can scarcely be called noble—nay, as compared with the last-named kind, may be almost called ignoble—but their builders still had some traditions left them of the times of art. They are built solidly and conscientiously at least, and if they have little or no beauty, yet have a certain commonsense and convenience about them; nor do they fail to re-

present the manners and feelings of their own time. The earliest of these, built about the reign of Queen Anne, stretch out a hand toward the Gothic times, and are not without picturesqueness, especially when their surroundings are beautiful. The latest, built in the latter days of the Georges, are certainly quite guiltless of picturesqueness, but are, as above said, solid, and not inconvenient. All these houses, both the so-called Queen Anne ones and the distinctively Georgian, are difficult enough to decorate, especially for those who have any leaning toward romance, because they have still some style left in them which one cannot ignore; at the same time that it is impossible for any one living out of the time in which they were built to sympathize with a style whose characteristics are mere whims, not founded on any principle. Still they are at the worst not aggressively ugly or base, and it is possible to live in them without serious disturbance to our work or thoughts; so that by the force of contrast they have become bright spots in the prevailing darkness of ugliness that has covered all modern life.

But we must not forget that that rebellion which we have met here, I hope, to further, has begun, and to-day shows visible tokens of its life; for of late there have been houses rising up among us here and there which have certainly not been planned either by the common cut-and-dried designers for builders, or by academical imitators of bygone styles. Though they may be called experimental, no one can say that they are not born of thought and principle, as well as of great capacity for design. It is nowise our business to-night to criticize them. I suspect their authors, who have gone through so many difficulties (not of their own breeding) in producing them, know their shortcomings much better than we can do, and are less elated by their successes than we are. At any rate, they are gifts to our country which will always be respected, whether the times better or worsen, and I call upon you to thank their designers most heartily for their forethought, labour, and hope.

Well, I have spoken of three qualifications to that degra-

dation of our dwellings which characterizes this period of history only. Making the best of it

First, there are the very few houses which have been left us from the times of art. Except that we may sometimes have the pleasure of seeing these, we most of us have little enough to do with them.

Secondly, there are those houses of the times when, though art was sick and all but dead, men had not quite given it up as a bad job, and at any rate had not learned systematic bad building; and when, moreover, they had what they wanted, and their lives were expressed by their architecture. Of these there are still left a good many all over the country, but they are lessening fast before the irresistible force of competition, and will soon be very rare indeed.

Thirdly, there are a few houses built and mostly inhabited by the ringleaders of the rebellion against sordid ugliness, which we are met here to further to-night. It is clear that as yet these are very few, or you could never have thought it worth your while to come here to hear the simple words I have to say to you on this subject.

Now, these are the exceptions. The rest is what really amounts to the dwellings of all our people, which are built without any hope of beauty or care for it—without any thought that there can be any pleasure in the look of an ordinary dwelling-house, and also (in consequence of this neglect of manliness) with scarce any heed to real convenience. It will, I hope, one day be hard to believe that such houses were built for a people not lacking in honesty, in independence of life, in elevation of thought, and consideration for others; not a whit of all that do they express, but rather hypocrisy, flunkeyism, and careless selfishness. The fact is, they are no longer part of our lives. We have given it up as a bad job. We are heedless if our houses express nothing of us but the very worst side of our character both national and personal.

This unmanly heedlessness, so injurious to civilization, so unjust to those that are to follow us, is the very thing we

want to shake people out of. We want to make them think about their homes, to take the trouble to turn them into dwellings fit for people free in mind and body—much might come of that, I think.

Now, to my mind, the first step towards this end is to follow the fashion of our nation, so often, so *very* often, called practical, and leaving for a little an ideal scarce conceivable, to try to get people to bethink them of what we can best do with those makeshifts which we cannot get rid of all at once.

I know that those lesser arts, by which alone this can be done, are looked upon by many wise and witty people as not worth the notice of a sensible man; but, since I am addressing a society of artists, I believe I am speaking to people who have got beyond even that stage of wisdom and wit, and that you think all the arts of importance. Yet, indeed, I should think I had but little claim on your attention if I deemed the question involved nothing save the gain of a little more content and a little more pleasure for those who already have abundance of content and pleasure; let me say it, that either I have erred in the aim of my whole life, or that the welfare of these lesser arts involves the question of the content and self-respect of all craftsmen, whether you call them artists or artisans. So I say again, my hope is that those who begin to consider carefully how to make the best of the chambers in which they eat and sleep and study, and hold converse with their friends, will breed in their minds a wholesome and fruitful discontent with the sordidness that even when they have done their best will surround their island of comfort, and that as they try to appease this discontent they will find that there is no way out of it but by insisting that all men's work shall be fit for free men and not for machines: my extravagant hope is that people will some day learn something of art, and so long for more, and will find, as I have, that there is no getting it save by the general acknowledgment of the right of every man to have fit work to do in a beautiful home. Therein lies all that is inde-

structible of the pleasure of life; no man need ask for more than that, no man should be granted less; and if he falls short of it, it is through waste and injustice that he is kept out of his birthright. Making the best of it

And now I will try what I can do in my hints on this making the best of it, first asking your pardon for this, that I shall have to give a great deal of negative advice, and be always saying "don't"—that, as you know, being much the lot of those who profess reform.

Before we go inside our house, nay, before we look at its outside, we may consider its garden, chiefly with reference to town gardening; which, indeed, I, in common, I suppose, with most others who have tried it, have found uphill work enough—all the more as in our part of the world few indeed have any mercy upon the one thing necessary for decent life in a town, its trees; till we have come to this, that one trembles at the very sound of an axe as one sits at one's work at home. However, uphill work or not, the town garden must not be neglected if we are to be in earnest in making the best of it.

Now I am bound to say town gardeners generally do rather the reverse of that: our suburban gardeners in London, for instance, oftenest wind about their little bit of gravel walk and grass plot in ridiculous imitation of an ugly big garden of the landscape-gardening style, and then with a strange perversity fill up the spaces with the most formal plants they can get; whereas the merest common sense should have taught them to lay out their morsel of ground in the simplest way, to fence it as orderly as might be, one part from the other (if it be big enough for that) and the whole from the road, and then to fill up the flower-growing space with things that are free and interesting in their growth, leaving Nature to do the desired complexity, which she will certainly not fail to do if we do not desert her for the florist, who, I must say, has made it harder work than it should be to get the best of flowers.

It is scarcely a digression to note his way of dealing with flowers, which, moreover, gives us an apt illustration of that

change without thought of beauty, change for the sake of change, which has played such a great part in the degradation of art in all times. So I ask you to note the way he has treated the rose, for instance: the rose has been grown double from I don't know when; the double rose was a gain to the world, a new beauty was given us by it, and nothing taken away, since the wild rose grows in every hedge. Yet even then one might be excused for thinking that the wild rose was scarce improved on, for nothing can be more beautiful in general growth or in detail than a wayside bush of it, nor can any scent be as sweet and pure as its scent. Nevertheless the garden-rose had a new beauty of abundant form, while its leaves had not lost the wonderfully delicate texture of the wild one. The full colour it had gained, from the blush-rose to the damask, was pure and true amidst all its added force, and though its scent had certainly lost some of the sweetness of the eglantine, it was fresh still, as well as so abundantly rich. Well, all that lasted till quite our own day, when the florists fell upon the rose—men who could never have enough—they strove for size and got it, a fine specimen of a florist's rose being about as big as a moderate Savoy cabbage. They tried for strong scent and got it—till a florist's rose has not unseldom a suspicion of the scent of the aforesaid cabbage—not at its best. They tried for strong colour and got it, strong and bad—like a conqueror. But all this while they missed the very essence of the rose's being; they thought there was nothing in it but redundance and luxury; they exaggerated these into coarseness, while they threw away the exquisite subtilty of form, delicacy of texture, and sweetness of colour, which, blent with the richness which the true garden-rose shares with many other flowers, yet makes it the queen of them all—the flower of flowers. Indeed, the worst of this is that these sham roses are driving the real ones out of existence. If we do not look to it our descendants will know nothing of the cabbage-rose, the loveliest in form of all, or the blush-rose with its dark green stems and unequalled colour, or the yellow-centred rose of the East, which carries the rich-

ness of scent to the very furthest point it can go without losing freshness: they will know nothing of all these, and I fear they will reproach the poets of past time for having done according to their wont, and exaggerated grossly the beauties of the rose. Making the best of it

Well, as a Londoner perhaps I have said too much of roses, since we can scarcely grow them among suburban smoke, but what I have said of them applies to other flowers, of which I will say this much more. Be very shy of double flowers; choose the old columbine where the clustering doves are unmistakable and distinct, not the double one, where they run into mere tatters. Choose (if you can get it) the old china-aster with the yellow centre, that goes so well with the purple-brown stems and curiously coloured florets, instead of the lumps that look like cut paper, of which we are now so proud. Don't be swindled out of that wonder of beauty, a single snowdrop; there is no gain and plenty of loss in the double one. More loss still in the double sunflower, which is a coarse-coloured and dull plant, whereas the single one, though a late comer to our gardens, is by no means to be despised, since it will grow anywhere, and is both interesting and beautiful, with its sharply chiselled yellow florets relieved by the quaintly patterned sad-coloured centre clogged with honey and beset with bees and butterflies.

So much for over-artificiality in flowers. A word or two about the misplacing of them. Don't have ferns in your garden. The hart's tongue in the clefts of the rock, the queer things that grow within reach of the spray of the waterfall, these are right in their places. Still more the brake on the woodside, whether in late autumn, when its withered haulm helps out the well-remembered woodland scent, or in spring, when it is thrusting its volutes through last year's waste. But all this is nothing to a garden, and is not to be got out of it; and if you try it you will take away from it all possible romance, the romance of a garden.

The same thing may be said about many plants which are curiosities only, which Nature meant to be grotesque, not

beautiful, and which are generally the growth of hot countries where things sprout over-quick and rank. Take note that the strangest of these come from the jungle and the tropical waste, from places where man is not at home, but is an intruder, an enemy. Go to a botanical garden and look at them, and think of those strange places to your heart's content. But don't set them to starve in your smoke-drenched scrap of ground amongst the bricks, for they will be no ornament to it.

As to colour in gardens. Flowers in masses are mighty strong colour, and if not used with a great deal of caution are very destructive to pleasure in gardening. On the whole, I think the best and safest plan is to mix up your flowers, and rather eschew great masses of colour—in combination I mean. But there are some flowers (inventions of men, *i.e.* florists) which are bad colour altogether, and not to be used at all. Scarlet geraniums, for instance, or the yellow calceolaria, which indeed are not uncommonly grown together profusely, in order, I suppose, to show that even flowers can be thoroughly ugly.

Another thing also much too commonly seen is an aberration of the human mind, which otherwise I should have been ashamed to warn you of. It is technically called carpet-gardening. Need I explain it further? I had rather not, for when I think of it even when I am quite alone I blush with shame at the thought.

I am afraid it is specially necessary in these days when making the best of it is a hard job, and when the ordinary iron hurdles are so common and so destructive of any kind of beauty in a garden, to say when you fence anything in a garden use a live hedge, or stones set flatwise (as they do in some parts of the Cotswold country), or timber, or wattle, or, in short, anything but iron.*

*I know that well-designed hammered iron trellises and gates have been used happily enough, though chiefly in rather grandiose gardens, and so they might be again—one of these days—but I fear not yet awhile.

And now to sum up as to a garden. Large or small, it should look both orderly and rich. It should be well fenced from the outside world. It should by no means imitate either the wilfulness or the wildness of Nature, but should look like a thing never to be seen except near a house. It should, in fact, look like a part of the house. It follows from this that no private pleasure-garden should be very big, and a public garden should be divided and made to look like so many flower-closes in a meadow, or a wood, or amidst the pavement. Making the best of it

It will be a key to right thinking about gardens if you consider in what kind of places a garden is most desired. In a very beautiful country, especially if it be mountainous, we can do without it well enough; whereas in a flat and dull country we crave after it, and there it is often the very making of the homestead. While in great towns, gardens, both private and public, are positive necessities if the citizens are to live reasonable and healthy lives in body and mind.

So much for the garden, of which, since I have said that it ought to be part of the house, I hope I have not spoken too much.

Now, as to the outside of our makeshift house, I fear it is too ugly to keep us long. Let what painting you have to do about it be as simple as possible, and be chiefly white or whitish; for when a building is ugly in form it will bear no decoration, and to mark its parts by varying colour will be the way to bring out its ugliness. So I don't advise you to paint your houses blood-red and chocolate with white facings, as seems to be getting the fashion in some parts of London. You should, however, always paint your sash-bars and window-frames white to break up the dreary space of window somewhat. The only other thing I have to say, is to warn you against using at all a hot brownish red, which some decorators are very fond of. Till some one invents a better name for it, let us call it cockroach colour, and have nought to do with it.

So we have got to the inside of our house, and are in the room we are to live in, call it by what name you will. As to its proportions, it will be great luck indeed in an ordinary modern house if they are tolerable; but let us hope for the best. If it is to be well proportioned, one of its parts, either its height, length, or breadth, ought to exceed the others, or be marked somehow. If it be square or so nearly as to seem so, it should not be high; if it be long and narrow, it might be high without any harm, but yet would be more interesting low; whereas if it be an obvious but moderate oblong on plan, great height will be decidedly good.

As to the parts of a room that we have to think of, they are wall, ceiling, floor, windows and doors, fireplace, and movables. Of these the wall is of so much the most importance to a decorator and will lead us so far a-field, that I will mostly clear off the other parts first, as to the mere arrangement of them, asking you meanwhile to understand that the greater part of what I shall be saying as to the design of the patterns for the wall, I consider more or less applicable to patterns everywhere.

As to the windows then; I fear we must grumble again. In most decent houses, or what are so called, the windows are much too big, and let in a flood of light in a haphazard and ill-considered way, which the indwellers are forced to obscure again by shutters, blinds, curtains, screens, heavy upholsteries, and such other nuisances. The windows, also, are almost always brought too low down, and often so low down as to have their sills on a level with our ankles, sending thereby a raking light across the room that destroys all pleasantness of tone. The windows, moreover, are either big rectangular holes in the wall, or, which is worse, have ill-proportioned round or segmental heads, while the common custom in "good" houses is either to fill these openings with one huge sheet of plate-glass, or to divide them across the middle with a thin bar. If we insist on glazing them thus, we may make up our minds that we have done the worst we can for our windows, nor can a room look

tolerable where it is so treated. You may see how people feel this by their admiration of the tracery of a Gothic window, or the lattice-work of a Cairo house. Our makeshift substitute for those beauties must be the filling of the window with moderate-sized panes of glass (plate-glass if you will) set in solid sash-bars; we shall then at all events feel as if we were indoors on a cold day—as if we had a roof over our heads. Making the best of it

As to the floor: a little time ago it was the universal custom for those who could afford it to cover it all up into its dustiest and crookedest corners with a carpet, good, bad, or indifferent. Now I daresay you have heard from others, whose subject is the health of houses rather than their art (if indeed the two subjects can be considered apart, as they cannot really be), you have heard from teachers like Dr. Richardson what a nasty and unwholesome custom this is, so I will only say that it looks nasty and unwholesome. Happily, however, it is now a custom so much broken into that we may consider it doomed; for in all houses that pretend to any taste of arrangement, the carpet is now a rug, large it may be, but at any rate not looking immovable, and not being a trap for dust in the corners. Still I would go further than this even and get rich people no longer to look upon a carpet as a necessity for a room at all, at least in the summer. This would have two advantages: 1st, It would compel us to have better floors (and less drafty), our present ones being one of the chief disgraces to modern building; and 2ndly, since we should have less carpet to provide, what we did have we could afford to have better. We could have a few real works of art at the same price for which we now have hundreds of yards of makeshift machine-woven goods. In any case it is a great comfort to see the actual floor; and the said floor may be, as you know, made very ornamental by either wood mosaic, or tile and marble mosaic; the latter especially is such an easy art as far as mere technicality goes, and so full of resources, that I think it is a great pity it is not used more. The contrast between its grey tones and the rich

positive colour of Eastern carpet-work is so beautiful, that the two together make satisfactory decoration for a room with little addition.

When wood mosaic or parquet-work is used, owing to the necessary simplicity of the forms, I think it best not to vary the colour of the wood. The variation caused by the diverse lie of the grain and so forth, is enough. Most decorators will be willing, I believe, to accept it as an axiom, that when a pattern is made of very simple geometrical forms, strong contrast of colour is to be avoided.

So much for the floor. As for its fellow, the ceiling, that is, I must confess, a sore point with me in my attempts at making the best of it. The simplest and most natural way of decorating a ceiling is to show the underside of the joists and beams duly moulded, and if you will, painted in patterns. How far this is from being possible in our modern makeshift houses, I suppose I need not say. Then there is a natural and beautiful way of ornamenting a ceiling by working the plaster into delicate patterns, such as you see in our Elizabethan and Jacobean houses; which often enough, richly designed and skilfully wrought as they are, are by no means pedantically smooth in finish—nay, may sometimes be called rough as to workmanship. But, unhappily there are few of the lesser arts that have fallen so low as the plasterer's. The cast work one sees perpetually in pretentious rooms is a mere ghastly caricature of ornament, which no one is expected to look at if he can help it. It is simply meant to say, "This house is built for a rich man." The very material of it is all wrong, as, indeed, mostly happens with an art that has fallen sick. That richly designed, freely wrought plastering of our old houses was done with a slowly-drying tough plaster, that encouraged the hand like modeller's clay, and could not have been done at all with the brittle plaster used in ceilings nowadays, whose excellence is supposed to consist in its smoothness only. To be good, according to our present false standard, it must shine like a sheet of hot-pressed paper, so that, for the present, and without the

expenditure of abundant time and trouble, this kind of ceiling decoration is not to be hoped for. Making the best of it

It may be suggested that we should paper our ceilings like our walls, but I can't think that it will do. Theoretically, a paper-hanging is so much distemper colour applied to a surface by being printed on paper instead of being painted on plaster by the hand; but practically, we never forget that it is paper, and a room papered all over would be like a box to live in. Besides, the covering a room all over with cheap recurring patterns in an uninteresting material, is but a poor way out of our difficulty, and one which we should soon tire of.

There remains, then, nothing but to paint our ceilings cautiously and with as much refinement as we can, when we can afford it: though even that simple matter is complicated by the hideousness of the aforesaid plaster ornaments and cornices, which are so very bad that you must ignore them by leaving them unpainted, though even this neglect, while you paint the flat of the ceiling, makes them in a way part of the decoration, and so is apt to beat you out of every scheme of colour conceivable. Still, I see nothing for it but cautious painting, or leaving the blank white space alone, to be forgotten if possible. This painting, of course, assumes that you know better than to use gas in your rooms, which will indeed soon reduce all your decorations to a pretty general average.

So now we come to the walls of our room, the part which chiefly concerns us, since no one will admit the possibility of leaving them quite alone. And the first question is, how shall we space them out horizontally?

If the room be small and not high, or the wall be much broken by pictures and tall pieces of furniture, I would not divide it horizontally. One pattern of paper, or whatever it may be, or one tint may serve us, unless we have in hand an elaborate and architectural scheme of decoration, as in a makeshift house is not like to be the case; but if it be a good-sized room, and the wall be not much broken up, some

horizontal division is good, even if the room be not very high.

How are we to divide it then? I need scarcely say not into two equal parts; no one out of the island of Laputa could do that. For the rest, unless again we have a very elaborate scheme of decoration, I think dividing it once, making it into two spaces, is enough. Now there are practically two ways of doing that: you may either have a narrow frieze below the cornice, and hang the wall thence to the floor, or you may have a moderate dado, say 4 feet 6 inches high, and hang the wall from the cornice to the top of the dado. Either way is good according to circumstances; the first with the tall hanging and the narrow frieze is fittest if your wall is to be covered with stuffs, tapestry, or panelling, in which case making the frieze a piece of delicate painting is desirable in default of such plaster-work as I have spoken of above; or even if the proportions of the room very much cry out for it, you may, in default of hand-painting, use a strip of printed paper, though this, I must say, is a makeshift of makeshifts. The division into dado and wall hung from thence to the cornice, is fittest for a wall which is to be covered with painted decoration, or its makeshift, paper-hangings.

As to these, I would earnestly dissuade you from using more than one pattern in one room, unless one of them be but a breaking of the surface with a pattern so insignificant as scarce to be noticeable. I have seen a good deal of the practice of putting pattern over pattern in paper-hangings, and it seems to me a very unsatisfactory one, and I am, in short, convinced, as I hinted just now, that cheap recurring patterns in a material which has no play of light in it, and no special beauty of its own, should be employed rather sparingly, or they destroy all refinement of decoration and blunt our enjoyment of whatever beauty may lie in the designs of such things.

Before I leave this subject of the spacing out of the wall for decoration, I should say that in dealing with a very high

room it is best to put nothing that attracts the eye above a level of about eight feet from the floor—to let everything above that be mere air and space, as it were. I think you will find that this will tend to take off that look of dreariness that often besets tall rooms. Making the best of it

So much then for the spacing out of our wall. We have now to consider what the covering of it is to be, which subject, before we have done with it, will take us over a great deal of ground and lead us into the consideration of designing for flat spaces in general with work other than picture-work.

To clear the way, I have a word or two to say about the treatment of the wood-work in our room. If I could I would have no wood-work in it that needed flat painting, meaning by that word a mere paying it over with four coats of tinted lead-pigment ground in oils or varnish, but unless one can have a noble wood, such as oak, I don't see what else is to be done. I have never seen deal stained transparently with success, and its natural colour is poor, and will not enter into any scheme of decoration, while polishing it makes it worse. In short, it is such a poor material that it must be hidden unless it be used on a big scale as mere timber. Even then, in a church roof or what not, colouring it with distemper will not hurt it, and in a room I should certainly do this to the wood-work of roof and ceiling, while I painted such wood-work as came within touch of hand. As to the colour of this, it should, as a rule, be of the same general tone as the walls, but a shade or two darker in tint. Very dark wood-work makes a room dreary and disagreeable, while unless the decoration be in a very bright key of colour, it does not do to have the wood-work lighter than the walls. For the rest, if you are lucky enough to be able to use oak, and plenty of it, found your decoration on that, leaving it just as it comes from the plane.

Now, as you are not bound to use anything for the decoration of your walls but simple tints, I will here say a few words on the main colours, before I go on to what is more

properly decoration, only in speaking of them one can scarce think only of such tints as are fit to colour a wall with, of which, to say truth, there are not many.

Though we may each have our special preferences among the main colours, which we shall do quite right to indulge, it is a sign of disease in an artist to have a prejudice against any particular colour, though such prejudices are common and violent enough among people imperfectly educated in art, or with naturally dull perceptions of it. Still, colours have their ways in decoration, so to say, both positively in themselves, and relatively to each man's way of using them. So I may be excused for setting down some things I seem to have noticed about these ways.

Yellow is not a colour that can be used in masses unless it be much broken or mingled with other colours, and even then it wants some material to help it out which has great play of light and shade in it. You know people are always calling yellow things golden, even when they are not at all the colour of gold, which, even unalloyed, is not a bright yellow. That shows that delightful yellows are not very positive, and that, as aforesaid, they need gleaming materials to help them. The light bright yellows, like jonquil and primrose, are scarcely usable in art, save in silk, whose gleam takes colour from and adds light to the local tint, just as sunlight does to the yellow blossoms which are so common in Nature. In dead materials, such as distemper colour, a positive yellow can only be used sparingly in combination with other tints.

Red is also a difficult colour to use, unless it be helped by some beauty of material, for, whether it tend toward yellow and be called scarlet, or towards blue and be crimson, there is but little pleasure in it, unless it be deep and full. If the scarlet pass a certain degree of impurity it falls into a hot brown-red, very disagreeable in large masses. If the crimson be much reduced it tends towards a cold colour called in these latter days magenta, impossible for an artist to use either by itself or in combination. The finest tint of red is a central one between crimson and scarlet, and is a very power-

ful colour indeed, but scarce to be got in a flat tint. A crimson broken by greyish-brown and tending towards russet is also a very useful colour, but, like all the finest reds, is rather a dyer's colour than a house-painter's; the world being very rich in soluble reds, which of course are not the most enduring of pigments, though very fast as soluble colours. Making the best of it

Pink, though one of the most beautiful colours in combination, is not easy to use as a flat tint even over moderate spaces; the more orangy shades of it are the most useful, a cold pink being a colour much to be avoided.

As to purple, no one in his senses would think of using it bright in masses. In combination it may be used somewhat bright, if it be warm and tend towards red; but the best and most characteristic shade of purple is nowise bright, but tends towards russet. Egyptian porphyry, especially when contrasted with orange, as in the pavement of St. Mark's at Venice, will represent the colour for you. At the British Museum, and one or two other famous libraries, are still left specimens of this tint, as Byzantine art in its palmy days understood it. These are books written with gold and silver on vellum stained purple, probably with the now lost murex or fish-dye of the ancients, the tint of which dye-stuff Pliny describes minutely and accurately in his "Natural History." I need scarcely say that no ordinary flat tint could reproduce this most splendid of colours.

Though green (at all events in England) is the colour widest used by Nature, yet there is not so much bright green used by her as many people seem to think; the most of it being used for a week or two in spring, when the leafage is small, and blended with the greys and other negative colours of the twigs; when "leaves grow large and long," as the ballad has it, they also grow grey. I believe it has been noted by Mr. Ruskin, and it certainly seems true, that the pleasure we take in the young spring foliage comes largely from its tenderness of tone rather than its brightness of hue. Anyhow, you may be sure that if we try to outdo Nature's green tints on our walls we shall fail, and make ourselves

uncomfortable to boot. We must, in short, be very careful of bright greens, and seldom, if ever, use them at once bright and strong.

On the other hand, do not fall into the trap of a dingy bilious-looking yellow-green, a colour to which I have a special and personal hatred, because (if you will excuse my mentioning personal matters) I have been supposed to have somewhat brought it into vogue. I assure you I am not really responsible for it.

The truth is, that to get a green that is at once pure and neither cold nor rank, and not too bright to live with, is, of simple things, as difficult as anything a decorator has to do; but it can be done, and without the help of special material; and when done such a green is so useful, and so restful to the eyes, that in this matter also we are bound to follow Nature and make large use of that work-a-day colour green.

But if green be called a work-a-day colour, surely blue must be called the holiday one, and those who long most for bright colours may please themselves most with it; for if you duly guard against getting it cold if it tend towards red, or rank if it tend towards green, you need not be much afraid of its brightness. Now, as red is above all a dyer's colour, so blue is especially a pigment and an enamel colour; the world is rich in insoluble blues, many of which are practically indestructible.

I have said that there are not many tints fit to colour a wall with: this is my list of them as far as I know; a solid red, not very deep, but rather describable as a full pink, and toned both with yellow and blue, a very fine colour if you can hit it. A light orangy pink, to be used rather sparingly. A pale golden tint, *i.e.*, a yellowish-brown; a very difficult colour to hit. A colour between these two last; call it pale copper colour. All these three you must be careful over, for if you get them muddy or dirty you are lost.

Tints of green from pure and pale to deepish and grey: always remembering that the purer the paler, and the deeper the greyer.

Tints of pure pale blue from a greenish one, the colour of a starling's egg, to a grey ultramarine colour, hard to use because so full of colour, but incomparable when right. In these you must carefully avoid the point at which the green overcomes the blue and turns it rank, or that at which the red overcomes the blue and produces those woeful hues of pale lavender and starch blue which have not seldom been favourites with decorators of elegant drawing-rooms and respectable dining-rooms. Making the best of it

You will understand that I am here speaking of distemper tinting, and in that material these are all the tints I can think of; if you use bolder, deeper or stronger colours I think you will find yourself beaten out of monochrome in order to get your colour harmonious.

One last word as to distemper which is not monochrome, and its makeshift, paper-hanging. I think it is always best not to force the colour, but to be content with getting it either quite light or quite grey in these materials, and in no case very dark, trusting for richness to stuffs, or to painting which allows of gilding being introduced.

I must finish these crude notes about general colour by reminding you that you must be moderate with your colour on the walls of an ordinary dwelling-room; according to the material you are using, you may go along the scale from light and bright to deep and rich, but some soberness of tone is absolutely necessary if you would not weary people till they cry out against all decoration. But I suppose this is a caution which only very young decorators are likely to need. It is the right-hand defection; the left-hand falling away is to get your colour dingy and muddy, a worse fault than the other because less likely to be curable. All right-minded craftsmen who work in colour will strive to make their work as bright as possible, as full of colour as the nature of the work will allow it to be. The meaning they may be bound to express, the nature of its material, or the use it may be put to, may limit this fulness; but in whatever key of colour they are working, if they do not succeed in getting the colour pure

and clear, they have not learned their craft, and if they do not see their fault when it is present in their work, they are not likely to learn it.

Now, hitherto we have not got further into the matter of decoration than to talk of its arrangement. Before I speak of some general matters connected with our subject, I must say a little on the design of the patterns which will form the chief part of your decoration. The subject is a wide and difficult one, and my time much too short to do it any justice, but here and there, perhaps, a hint may crop up, and I may put it in a way somewhat new.

On the whole, in speaking of these patterns I shall be thinking of those that necessarily recur; designs which have to be carried out by more or less mechanical appliances, such as the printing-block or the loom.

Since we have been considering colour lately, we had better take that side first, though I know it will be difficult to separate the consideration of it from that of the other necessary qualifications of design.

The first step away from monochrome is breaking the ground by putting a pattern on it of the same colour, but of a lighter or darker shade, the first being the best and most natural way. I need say but little on this as a matter of colour, though many very important designs are so treated. One thing I have noticed about these damasks, as I should call them: that of the three chief colours, red is the one where the two shades must be the nearest to one another, or you get the effect poor and weak; while in blue you may have a great deal of difference without losing colour, and green holds a middle place between the two.

Next, if you make these two shades different in tint as well as, or instead of, in depth, you have fairly got out of monochrome, and will find plenty of difficulties in getting your two tints to go well together. The putting, for instance, of a light greenish blue on a deep reddish one, turquoise on sapphire, will try all your skill. The Persians practise this feat, but not often without adding a third colour, and so getting

into the next stage. In fact, this plan of relieving the pattern by shifting its tint as well as its depth, is chiefly of use in dealing with quite low-toned colours—golden browns or greys, for instance. In dealing with the more forcible ones, you will find it in general necessary to add a third colour at least, and so get into the next stage. Making the best of it

This is the relieving a pattern of more than one colour, but all the colours light, upon a dark ground. This is above all useful in cases where your palette is somewhat limited; say, for instance, in a figured cloth which has to be woven mechanically, and where you have but three or four colours in a line, including the ground.

You will not find this a difficult way of relieving your pattern, if you only are not too ambitious of getting the diverse superimposed colours too forcible on the one hand, so that they fly out from one another, or on the other hand too delicate, so that they run together into confusion. The excellence of this sort of work lies in a clear but soft relief of the form, in colours each beautiful in itself, and harmonious one with the other on ground whose colour is also beautiful, though unobtrusive. Hardness ruins the work, confusion of form caused by timidity of colour annoys the eye, and makes it restless, and lack of colour is felt as destroying the *raison d'être* of it. So you see it taxes the designer heavily enough after all. Nevertheless I still call it the easiest way of complete pattern-designing.

I have spoken of it as the placing of a light pattern on a dark ground. I should mention that in the fully developed form of the design I am thinking of there is often an impression given, of there being more than one plane in the pattern. Where the pattern is strictly on one plane, we have not reached the full development of this manner of designing, the full development of colour and form used together, but form predominant.

We are not left without examples of this kind of design at its best. The looms of Corinth, Palermo, and Lucca, in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, turned out

figured silk cloths, which were so widely sought for, that you may see specimens of their work figured on fifteenth-century screens in East Anglian churches, or the background of pictures by the Van Eycks, while one of the most important collections of the actual goods is preserved in the treasury of the Mary Church at Dantzig; the South Kensington Museum has also a very fine collection of these, which I can't help thinking are not quite as visible to the public as they should be. They are, however, discoverable by the help of Dr. Rock's excellent catalogue published by the department, and I hope will, as the Museum gains space, be more easy to see.

Now to sum up: This method of pattern-designing must be considered the Western and civilized method: that used by craftsmen who were always seeing pictures, and whose minds were full of definite ideas of form. Colour was essential to their work, and they loved it and understood it, but always subordinated it to form.

There is next the method of relief by placing a dark figure on a light ground. Sometimes this method is but the converse of the last, and is not so useful, because it is capable of less variety and play of colour and tone. Sometimes it must be looked on as a transition from the last-mentioned method to the next of colour laid by colour. Thus used there is something incomplete about it. One finds oneself longing for more colours than one's shuttles or blocks allow one. There is a need felt for the speciality of the next method, where the dividing line is used, and it gradually gets drawn into that method. Which, indeed, is the last I have to speak to you of, and in which colour is laid by colour.

In this method it is necessary that the diverse colours should be separated each by a line of another colour, and that not merely to mark the form, but to complete the colour itself; which outlining, while it serves the purpose of gradation, which in more naturalistic work is got by shading, makes the design quite flat, and takes from it any idea of there being more than one plane in it.

This way of treating pattern-design is so much more difficult than the others, as to be almost an art by itself, and to demand a study apart. As the method of relief by laying light upon dark may be called the Western way of treatment and the civilized, so this is the Eastern, and, to a certain extent, the uncivilized. Making the best of it

But it has a wide range, from works where the form is of little importance and only exists to make boundaries for colour, to those in which the form is so studied, so elaborate, and so lovely, that it is hardly true to say that the form is subordinate to the colour; while, on the other hand, so much delight is taken in the colour, it is so inventive and so unerringly harmonious, that it is scarcely possible to think of the form without it—the two interpenetrate.

Such things as these, which, as far as I know, are only found in Persian art at its best, do carry the art of mere pattern-designing to its utmost perfection, and it seems somewhat hard to call such an art uncivilized. But, you see, its whole soul was given up to producing matters of subsidiary art, as people call it; its carpets were of more importance than its pictures; nay, properly speaking, they were its pictures. And it may be that such an art never has a future of change before it, save the change of death, which has now certainly come over that Eastern art; while the more impatient, more aspiring, less sensuous art which belongs to Western civilization may bear many a change and not die utterly; nay, may feed on its intellect alone for a season, and enduring the martyrdom of a grim time of ugliness, may live on, rebuking at once the narrow-minded pedant of science, and the luxurious tyrant of plutocracy, till change bring back the spring again, and it blossoms once more into pleasure. May it be so!

Meanwhile, we may say for certain that colour for colour's sake only will never take real hold on the art of our civilization, not even in its subsidiary art. Imitation and affectation may deceive people into thinking that such an instinct is quickening amongst us, but the deception will not last. To

have a meaning and to make others feel and understand it, must ever be the aim and end of our Western art.

Before I leave this subject of the colouring of patterns, I must warn you against the abuse of the dotting, hatching, and lining of backgrounds, and other mechanical contrivances for breaking them; such practices are too often the resource to which want of invention is driven, and unless used with great caution they vulgarize a pattern completely. Compare, for instance, those Sicilian and other silk cloths I have mentioned with the brocades (common everywhere) turned out from the looms of Lyons, Venice, and Genoa, at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. The first perfectly simple in manufacture, trusting wholly to beauty of design, and the play of light on the naturally woven surface, while the latter eke out their gaudy feebleness with spots and ribs and long floats, and all kinds of meaningless tormenting of the web, till there is nothing to be learned from them save a warning.

So much for the colour of pattern-designing. Now, for a space, let us consider some other things that are necessary to it, and which I am driven to call its moral qualities, and which are finally reducible to two—order and meaning.

Without order your work cannot even exist; without meaning, it were better not to exist.

Now order imposes on us certain limitations, which partly spring from the nature of the art itself, and partly from the materials in which we have to work; and it is a sign of mere incompetence in either a school or an individual to refuse to accept such limitations, or even not to accept them joyfully and turn them to special account, much as if a poet should complain of having to write in measure and rhyme.

Now, in our craft the chief of the limitations that spring from the essence of the art is that the decorator's art cannot be imitative even to the limited extent that the picture-painter's art is.

This you have been told hundreds of times, and in theory it is accepted everywhere, so I need not say much about it—

chiefly this, that it does not excuse want of observation of nature, or laziness of drawing, as some people seem to think. On the contrary, unless you know plenty about the natural form that you are conventionalizing, you will not only find it impossible to give people a satisfactory impression of what is in your own mind about it, but you will also be so hampered by your ignorance, that you will not be able to make your conventionalized form ornamental. It will not fill a space properly, or look crisp and sharp, or fulfil any purpose you may strive to put it to. Making the best of it

It follows from this that your convention must be your own, and not borrowed from other times and peoples; or, at the least, that you must make it your own by thoroughly understanding both the nature and the art you are dealing with. If you do not heed this, I do not know but what you may not as well turn to and draw laborious portraits of natural forms of flower and bird and beast, and stick them on your walls anyhow. It is true you will not get ornament so, but you may learn something for your trouble; whereas, using an obviously true principle as a stalking-horse for laziness of purpose and lack of invention, will but injure art all round, and blind people to the truth of that very principle.

Limitations also, both as to imitation and exuberance, are imposed on us by the office our pattern has to fulfil. A small and often-recurring pattern of a subordinate kind will bear much less naturalism than one in a freer space and more important position, and the more obvious the geometrical structure of a pattern is, the less its parts should tend toward naturalism. This has been well understood from the earliest days of art to the very latest times during which pattern-designing has clung to any wholesome tradition, but is pretty generally unheeded at present.

As to the limitations that arise from the material we may be working in, we must remember that all material offers certain difficulties to be overcome, and certain facilities to be made the most of. Up to a certain point you must be the

master of your material, but you must never be so much the master as to turn it surly, so to say. You must not make it your slave, or presently you will be a slave also. You must master it so far as to make it express a meaning, and to serve your aim at beauty. You may go beyond that necessary point for your own pleasure and amusement, and still be in the right way; but if you go on after that merely to make people stare at your dexterity in dealing with a difficult thing, you have forgotten art along with the rights of your material, and you will make not a work of art, but a mere toy; you are no longer an artist, but a juggler. The history of the arts gives us abundant examples and warnings in this matter. First clear steady principle, then playing with the danger, and lastly falling into the snare, mark with the utmost distinctness the times of the health, the decline, and the last sickness of art.

Allow me to give you one example in the noble art of mosaic. The difficulty in it necessary to be overcome was the making of a pure and true flexible line, not over thick, with little bits of glass or marble nearly rectangular. Its glory lay in its durability, the lovely colour to be got in it, the play of light on its facetted and gleaming surface, and the clearness mingled with softness, with which forms were relieved on the lustrous gold which was so freely used in its best days. Moreover, however bright were the colours used, they were toned delightfully by the greyness which the innumerable joints between the tesseræ spread over the whole surface.

Now the difficulty of the art was overcome in its earliest and best days, and no care or pains were spared in making the most of its special qualities, while for long and long no force was put upon the material to make it imitate the qualities of brush-painting, either in power of colour, in delicacy of gradation, or intricacy of treating a subject; and, moreover, easy as it would have been to minimize the jointing of the tesseræ, no attempt was made at it.

But as time went on, men began to tire of the solemn simplicity of the art, and began to aim at making it keep pace

with the growing complexity of picture painting, and, though still beautiful, it lost colour without gaining form. From that point (say about 1460), it went on from bad to worse, till at last men were set to work in it merely because it was an intractable material in which to imitate oil-painting, and by this time it was fallen from being a master art, the crowning beauty of the most solemn buildings, to being a mere tax on the craftsmen's patience, and a toy for people who no longer cared for art. And just such a history may be told of every art that deals with special material. Making the best of it

Under this head of order should be included something about the structure of patterns, but time for dealing with such an intricate question obviously fails me; so I will but note that, whereas it has been said that a recurring pattern should be constructed on a geometrical basis, it is clear that it cannot be constructed otherwise; only the structure may be more or less masked, and some designers take a great deal of pains to do so.

I cannot say that I think this always necessary. It may be so when the pattern is on a very small scale, and meant to attract but little attention. But it is sometimes the reverse of desirable in large and important patterns, and, to my mind, all noble patterns should at least *look* large. Some of the finest and pleasantest of these show their geometrical structure clearly enough; and if the lines of them grow strongly and flow gracefully, I think they are decidedly helped by their structure not being elaborately concealed.

At the same time in all patterns which are meant to fill the eye and satisfy the mind, there should be a certain mystery. We should not be able to read the whole thing at once, nor desire to do so, nor be impelled by that desire to go on tracing line after line to find out how the pattern is made, and I think that the obvious presence of a geometrical order, if it be, as it should be, beautiful, tends towards this end, and prevents our feeling restless over a pattern.

That every line in a pattern should have its due growth, and be traceable to its beginning, this, which you have

doubtless heard before, is undoubtedly essential to the finest pattern-work; equally so is it that no stem should be so far from its parent stock as to look weak or wavering. Mutual support and unceasing progress distinguish real and natural order from its mockery, pedantic tyranny.

Every one who has practised the designing of patterns knows the necessity for covering the ground equably and richly. This is really to a great extent the secret of obtaining the look of satisfying mystery aforesaid, and it is the very test of capacity in a designer.

Finally, no amount of delicacy is too great in drawing the curves of a pattern, no amount of care in getting the leading lines right from the first can be thrown away, for beauty of detail cannot afterwards cure any shortcoming in this. Remember that a pattern is either right or wrong. It cannot be forgiven for blundering, as a picture may be which has otherwise great qualities in it. It is with a pattern as with a fortress, it is no stronger than its weakest point. A failure for ever recurring torments the eye too much to allow the mind to take any pleasure in suggestion and intention.

As to the second moral quality of design—meaning, I include in that the invention and imagination which forms the soul of this art, as of all others, and which, when submitted to the bonds of order, has a body and a visible existence.

Now you may well think that there is less to be said of this than the other quality; for form may be taught, but the spirit that breathes through it cannot be. So I will content myself with saying this on these qualities, that though a designer may put all manner of strangeness and surprise into his patterns, he must not do so at the expense of beauty. You will never find a case in this kind of work where ugliness and violence are not the result of barrenness, and not of fertility of invention. The fertile man, he of resource, has not to worry himself about invention. He need but think of beauty and simplicity of expression; his work will grow on and on, one thing leading to another, as it fares with a beautiful tree. Whereas the laborious paste-and-scissors man goes

hunting up and down for oddities, sticks one in here and another there, and tries to connect them with commonplace; and when it is all done, the oddities are not more inventive than the commonplace, nor the commonplace more graceful than the oddities. Making the best of it

No pattern should be without some sort of meaning. True it is that that meaning may have come down to us traditionally, and not be our own invention, yet we must at heart understand it, or we can neither receive it, nor hand it down to our successors. It is no longer tradition if it is servilely copied, without change, the token of life. You may be sure that the softest and loveliest of patterns will weary the steadiest admirers of their school as soon as they see that here is no hope of growth in them. For you know all art is compact of effort, of failure and of hope, and we cannot but think that somewhere perfection lies ahead, as we look anxiously for the better thing that is to come from the good.

Furthermore, you must not only mean something in your patterns, but must also be able to make others understand that meaning. They say that the difference between a genius and a madman is that the genius can get one or two people to believe in him, whereas the madman, poor fellow, has himself only for his audience. Now the only way in our craft of design for compelling people to understand you is to follow hard on Nature; for what else can you refer people to, or what else is there which everybody can understand?—everybody that it is worth addressing yourself to, which includes all people who can feel and think.

Now let us end the talk about those qualities of invention and imagination with a word of memory and of thanks to the designers of time past. Surely he who runs may read them abundantly set forth in those lesser arts they practised. Surely it had been pity indeed, if so much of this had been lost as would have been if it had been crushed out by the pride of intellect, that will not stoop to look at beauty unless its own kings and great men have had a hand in it. Belike the thoughts of the men who wrought this kind of art could

not have been expressed in grander ways or more definitely, or, at least, would not have been; therefore I believe I am not thinking only of my own pleasure, but of the pleasure of many people, when I praise the usefulness of the lives of these men, whose names are long forgotten, but whose works we still wonder at. In their own way they meant to tell us how the flowers grew in the gardens of Damascus, or how the hunt was up on the plains of Kirman, or how the tulips shone among the grass in the mid-Persian valley, and how their souls delighted in it all, and what joy they had in life; nor did they fail to make their meaning clear to some of us.

But, indeed, they and other matters have led us afar from our makeshift house, and the room we have to decorate therein. And there is still left the fireplace to consider.

Now I think there is nothing about a house in which a contrast is greater between old and new than this piece of architecture. The old, either delightful in its comfortable simplicity, or decorated with the noblest and most meaning art in the place; the modern, mean, miserable, uncomfortable, and showy, plastered about with wretched sham ornament, trumpery of cast-iron, and brass and polished steel, and what not—offensive to look at, and a nuisance to clean—and the whole thing huddled up with rubbish of ash-pan, and fender, and rug, till surely the hearths which we have been bidden so often to defend (whether there was a chance of their being attacked or not) have now become a mere figure of speech the meaning of which in a short time it will be impossible for learned philologists to find out.

I do most seriously advise you to get rid of all this, or as much of it as you can without absolute ruin to your prospects in life; and even if you do not know how to decorate it, at least have a hole in the wall of a convenient shape, faced with such bricks or tiles as will at once bear fire and clean; then some sort of iron basket in it, and out from that a real hearth of cleanable brick or tile, which will not make you blush when you look at it, and as little in the way of guard and fender as you think will be safe; that will do to begin

with. For the rest, if you have wooden work about the fire-place, which is often good to have, don't mix up the wood and the tiles together; let the wood-work look like part of the wall-covering, and the tiles like part of the chimney. Making the best of it

As for movable furniture, even if time did not fail us, 'tis a large subject—or a very small one—so I will but say, don't have too much of it; have none for mere finery's sake, or to satisfy the claims of custom—these are flat truisms, are they not? But really it seems as if some people had never thought of them, for 'tis almost the universal custom to stuff up some rooms so that you can scarcely move in them, and to leave others deadly bare; whereas all rooms ought to look as if they were lived in, and to have, so to say, a friendly welcome ready for the incomer.

A dining-room ought not to look as if one went into it as one goes into a dentist's parlour—for an operation, and came out of it when the operation was over—the tooth out, or the dinner in. A drawing-room ought to look as if some kind of work could be done in it less toilsome than being bored. A library certainly ought to have books in it, not boots only, as in Thackeray's country snob's house, but so ought each and every room in the house more or less; also, though all rooms should look tidy, and even very tidy, they ought not to look too tidy.

Furthermore, no room of the richest man should look grand enough to make a simple man shrink in it, or luxurious enough to make a thoughtful man feel ashamed in it; it will not do so if Art be at home there, for she has no foes so deadly as insolence and waste. Indeed, I fear that at present the decoration of rich men's houses is mostly wrought out at the bidding of grandeur and luxury, and that art has been mostly cowed or shamed out of them; nor when I come to think of it will I lament it overmuch. Art was not born in the palace; rather she fell sick there, and it will take more bracing air than that of rich men's houses to heal her again. If she is ever to be strong enough to help mankind once more, she must gather strength in simple places; the refuge

from wind and weather to which the goodman comes home from field or hill-side; the well-tidied space into which the craftsman draws from the litter of loom, and smithy, and bench; the scholar's island in the sea of books; the artist's clearing in the canvas-grove: it is from these places that Art must come if she is ever again to be enthroned in that other kind of building, which I think, under some name or other, whether you call it Church or Hall of Reason, or what not, will always be needed; the building in which people meet to forget their own transient personal and family troubles in aspirations for their fellows and the days to come, and which to a certain extent make up to town-dwellers for their loss of field, and river, and mountain.

Well, it seems to me that these two kinds of buildings are all we have really to think of, together with whatsoever outhouses, workshops, and the like, may be necessary. Surely the rest may quietly drop to pieces for aught we care—unless it should be thought good in the interest of history to keep one standing in each big town to show posterity what strange, ugly, uncomfortable houses rich men dwelt in once upon a time.

Meantime now, when rich men won't have art, and poor men can't, there is, nevertheless, some unthinking craving for it, some restless feeling in men's minds of something lacking somewhere, which has made many benevolent people seek for the possibility of cheap art.

What do they mean by that? One art for the rich and another for the poor? No, it won't do. Art is not so accommodating as the justice or religion of society, and she won't have it.

What then? there has been cheap art at some times certainly, at the expense of the starvation of the craftsmen. But people can't mean that; and if they did, would, happily, no longer have the same chance of getting it that they once had. Still they think art can be got round some way or other—jockeyed, so to say. I rather think in this fashion: that a highly gifted and carefully educated man shall, like Mr.

Pecksniff, squint at a sheet of paper, and that the results of that squint shall set a vast number of well-fed, contented operatives (they are ashamed to call them workmen) turning crank handles for ten hours a-day, bidding them keep what gifts and education they may have been born with for their—I was going to say leisure hours, but I don't know how to, for if I were to work ten hours a-day at work I despised and hated, I should spend my leisure I hope in political agitation, but I fear—in drinking. So let us say that the aforesaid operatives will have to keep their inborn gifts and education for their dreams. Well, from this system are to come threefold blessings—food and clothing, poorish lodgings and a little leisure to the operatives, enormous riches to the capitalists that rent them, together with moderate riches to the squinter on the paper; and lastly, very decidedly lastly, abundance of cheap art for the operatives or crank-turners to buy—in their dreams.

Well, there have been many other benevolent and economical schemes for keeping your cake after you have eaten it, for skinning a flint, and boiling a flea down for its tallow and glue, and this one of cheap art may just go its way with the others.

Yet to my mind real art is cheap, even at the price that must be paid for it. That price is, in short, the providing of a handicraftsman who shall put his own individual intelligence and enthusiasm into the goods he fashions. So far from his labour being "divided," which is the technical phrase for his always doing one minute piece of work, and never being allowed to think of any other; so far from that, he must know all about the ware he is making and its relation to similar wares; he must have a natural aptitude for his work so strong, that no education can force him away from his special bent. He must be allowed to think of what he is doing, and to vary his work as the circumstances of it vary, and his own moods. He must be for ever striving to make the piece he is at work at better than the last. He must refuse at anybody's bidding to turn out, I won't say a

bad, but even an indifferent piece of work, whatever the public want, or think they want. He must have a voice, and a voice worth listening to in the whole affair.

Such a man I should call, not an operative, but a workman. You may call him an artist if you will, for I have been describing the qualities of artists as I know them; but a capitalist will be apt to call him a "troublesome fellow," a radical of radicals, and, in fact, he will be troublesome—mere grit and friction in the wheels of the money-grinding machine.

Yes, such a man will stop the machine perhaps; but it is only through him that you can have art, *i.e.* civilization unmaimed, if you really want it; so consider, if you do want it, and will pay the price and give the workman his due.

What is his due? that is, what can he take from you, and be the man that you want? Money enough to keep him from fear of want or degradation for him and his; leisure enough from bread-earning work (even though it be pleasant to him) to give him time to read and think, and connect his own life with the life of the great world; work enough of the kind aforesaid, and praise of it, and encouragement enough to make him feel good friends with his fellows; and lastly (not least, for 'tis verily part of the bargain), his own due share of art, the chief part of which will be a dwelling that does not lack the beauty which Nature would freely allow it, if our own perversity did not turn Nature out of doors.

That is the bargain to be struck, such work and such wages; and I believe that if the world wants the work and is willing to pay the wages, the workmen will not long be wanting.

On the other hand, if it be certain that the world—that is, modern civilized society—will nevermore ask for such workmen, then I am as sure as that I stand here breathing, that art is dying: that the spark still smouldering is not to be quickened into life, but damped into death. And indeed, often, in my fear of that, I think, "Would that I could see what is to take the place of art!" For, whether modern civilized society *can* make that bargain aforesaid, who shall say? I know well

—who could fail to know it?—that the difficulties are great. Making the best of it

Too apt has the world ever been, "for the sake of life to cast away the reasons for living," and perhaps is more and more apt to it as the conditions of life get more intricate, as the race to avoid ruin, which seems always imminent and overwhelming, gets swifter and more terrible. Yet how would it be if we were to lay aside fear and turn in the face of all that, and stand by our claim to have, one and all of us, reasons for living? Mayhap the heavens would not fall on us if we did.

Anyhow, let us make up our minds which we want, art, or the absence of art, and be prepared if we want art, to give up many things, and in many ways to change the conditions of life. Perhaps there are those who will understand me when I say that that necessary change may make life poorer for the rich, rougher for the refined, and, it may be, duller for the gifted—for a while; that it may even take such forms that not the best or wisest of us shall always be able to know it for a friend, but may at whiles fight against it as a foe. Yet, when the day comes that gives us visible token of art rising like the sun from below—when it is no longer a justly despised whim of the rich, or a lazy habit of the so-called educated, but a thing that labour begins to crave as a necessity, even as labour is a necessity for all men—in that day how shall all trouble be forgotten, all folly forgiven—even our own!

Little by little it must come, I know. Patience and prudence must not be lacking to us, but courage still less. Let us be a Gideon's band. "Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return, and depart early from Mount Gilead." And among that band let there be no delusions; let the last encouraging lie have been told, the last after-dinner humbug spoken, for surely, though the days seem dark, we may remember that men longed for freedom while yet they were slaves; that it was in times when swords were reddened every day that men began to think of peace and order, and to strive to win them.

Hopes and Fears for Art

We who think, and can enjoy the feast that Nature has spread for us, is it not both our right and our duty to rebel against that slavery of the waste of life's joys, which people thoughtless and joyless, by no fault of their own, have wrapped the world in? From our own selves we can tell that there is hope of victory in our rebellion, since we have art enough in our lives, not to content us, but to make us long for more, and that longing drives us into trying to spread art and the longing for art; and as it is with us so it will be with those that we win over: little by little, we may well hope, will do its work, till at last a great many men will have enough of art to see how little they have, and how much they might better their lives, if every man had his due share of art—that is, just so much as he could use if a fair chance were given him.

Is that, indeed, too extravagant a hope? Have you not heard how it has gone with many a cause before now? First, few men heed it; next, most men contemn it; lastly, all men accept it—and the cause is won.

THE PROSPECTS OF ARCHITECTURE IN CIVILIZATION. DELIVERED AT THE LONDON INSTITUTION, MARCH 10, 1881.

"—— the horrible doctrine that this universe is a Cockney Nightmare—which no creature ought for a moment to believe or listen to."—Thomas Carlyle.

THE word Architecture has, I suppose, to most of you the meaning of the art of building nobly and ornamentally. Now I believe the practice of this art to be one of the most important things which man can turn his hand to, and the consideration of it to be worth the attention of serious people, not for an hour only, but for a good part of their lives, even though they may not have to do with it professionally.

But, noble as that art is by itself, and though it is specially the art of civilization, it neither ever has existed nor never can exist alive and progressive by itself, but must cherish and be cherished by all the crafts whereby men make the things which they intend shall be beautiful, and shall last somewhat beyond the passing day.

It is this union of the arts, mutually helpful and harmoniously subordinated one to another, which I have learned to think of as Architecture, and when I use the word to-night, that is what I shall mean by it and nothing narrower.

A great subject truly, for it embraces the consideration of the whole external surroundings of the life of man; we cannot escape from it if we would so long as we are part of civilization, for it means the moulding and altering to human needs of the very face of the earth itself, except in the outermost desert.

Neither can we hand over our interests in it to a little band of learned men, and bid them seek and discover, and fashion, that we may at last stand by and wonder at the work, and learn a little of how 'twas all done: 'tis we ourselves, each one of us, who must keep watch and ward over the fairness of the earth, and each with his own soul and hand do his due share

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therein, lest we deliver to our sons a lesser treasure than our fathers left to us.

Nor, again, is there time enough and to spare that we may leave this matter alone till our latter days or let our sons deal with it: for so busy and eager is mankind, that the desire of to-day makes us utterly forget the desire of yesterday and the gain it brought; and whensoever in any object of pursuit we cease to long for perfection, corruption sure and speedy leads from life to death and all is soon over and forgotten: time enough there may be for many things: for peopling the desert; for breaking down the walls between nation and nation; for learning the innermost secrets of the fashion of our souls and bodies, the air we breathe, and the earth we tread on: time enough for subduing all the forces of nature to our material wants: but no time to spare before we turn our eyes and our longing to the fairness of the earth; lest the wave of human need sweep over it and make it not a hopeful desert as it once was, but a hopeless prison; lest man should find at last that he has toiled and striven, and conquered, and set all things on the earth under his feet, that he might live thereon himself unhappy.

Most true it is that when any spot of earth's surface has been marred by the haste or carelessness of civilization, it is heavy work to seek a remedy, nay a work scarce conceivable; for the desire to live on any terms which nature has implanted in us, and the terrible swift multiplication of the race which is the result of it, thrusts out of men's minds all thought of other hopes, and bars the way before us as with a wall of iron: no force but a force equal to that which marred can ever mend, or give back those ruined places to hope and civilization.

Therefore I entreat you to turn your minds to thinking of what is to come of Architecture, that is to say, the fairness of the earth amidst the habitations of men: for the hope and the fear of it will follow us though we try to escape it; it concerns us all, and needs the help of all; and what we do herein must be done at once, since every day of our neglect adds to the heap of troubles a blind force is making for us; till it may

come to this if we do not look to it, that we shall one day have to call, not on peace and prosperity, but on violence and ruin to rid us of them.

In making this appeal to you, I will not suppose that I am speaking to any who refuse to admit that we who are part of civilization are responsible to posterity for what may befall the fairness of the earth in our own days, for what we have done, in other words, towards the progress of Architecture; if any such exists among cultivated people, I need not trouble myself about them; for they would not listen to me, nor should I know what to say to them.

On the other hand, there may be some here who have a knowledge of their responsibility in this matter, but to whom the duty that it involves seems an easy one, since they are fairly satisfied with the state of Architecture as it now is: I do not suppose that they fail to note the strange contrast which exists between the beauty that still clings to some habitations of men and the ugliness which is the rule in others, but it seems to them natural and inevitable, and therefore does not trouble them: and they fulfil their duties to civilization and the arts by sometimes going to see the beautiful places, and gathering together a few matters to remind them of these for the adornment of the ugly dwellings in which their homes are enshrined: for the rest, they have no doubt that it is natural and not wrong that while all ancient towns, I mean towns whose houses are largely ancient, should be beautiful and romantic, all modern ones should be ugly and commonplace: it does not seem to them that this contrast is of any import to civilization, or that it expresses anything save that one town *is* ancient as to its buildings and the other modern. If their thoughts carry them into looking any farther into the contrasts between ancient art and modern, they are not dissatisfied with the result: they may see things to reform here and there, but they suppose, or, let me say, take for granted, that art is alive and healthy, is on the right road, and that following that road, it will go on living for ever, much as it is now.

It is not unfair to say that this languid complacency is the general attitude of cultivated people towards the arts: of course if they were ever to think seriously of them, they would be startled into discomfort by the thought that civilization as it now is brings inevitable ugliness with it: surely if they thought this, they would begin to think that this was not natural and right; they would see that this was not what civilization aimed at in its struggling days: but they do not think seriously of the arts because they have been hitherto defended by a law of nature which forbids men to see evils which they are not ready to redress.

Hitherto: but there are not wanting signs that that defence may fail them one day, and it has become the duty of all true artists, and all men who love life though it be troublous better than death though it be peaceful, to strive to pierce that defence and sting the world, cultivated and uncultivated, into discontent and struggle.

Therefore I will say that the contrast between past art and present, the universal beauty of men's habitations as they *were* fashioned, and the universal ugliness of them as they *are* fashioned, is of the utmost import to civilization, and that it expresses much; it expresses no less than a blind brutality which will destroy art at least, whatever else it may leave alive: art is not healthy, it even scarcely lives; it is on the wrong road, and if it follow that road will speedily meet its death on it.

Now perhaps you will say that by asserting that the general attitude of cultivated people towards the arts is a languid complacency with this unhealthy state of things, I am admitting that cultivated people generally do not care about the arts, and that therefore this threatened death of them will not frighten people much, even if the threat be founded on truth: so that those are but beating the air who strive to rouse people into discontent and struggle.

Well, I will run the risk of offending you by speaking plainly, and saying, that to me it seems over true that cultivated people in general do *not* care about the arts: neverthe-

less I will answer any possible challenge as to the usefulness of trying to rouse them to thought about the matter, by saying that they do not care about the arts because they do not know what they mean, or what they lose in lacking them: cultivated, that is rich, as they are, they are also under that harrow of hard necessity which is driven onward so remorselessly by the competitive commerce of the latter days; a system which is drawing near now I hope to its perfection, and therefore to its death and change: the many millions of civilization, as labour is now organized, can scarce think seriously of anything but the means of earning their daily bread; they do not know of art, it does not touch their lives at all: the few thousands of cultivated people whom Fate, not always as kind to them as she looks, has placed above the material necessity for this hard struggle, are nevertheless bound by it in spirit: the reflex of the grinding trouble of those who toil to live that they may live to toil weighs upon them also, and forbids them to look upon art as a matter of importance: they know it but as a toy, not as a serious help to life: as they know it, it can no more lift the burden from the conscience of the rich than it can from the weariness of the poor. They do not know what art means: as I have said, they think that as labour is now organized art can go indefinitely as *it* is now organized, practised by a few for a few, adding a little interest, a little refinement to the lives of those who have come to look upon intellectual interest and spiritual refinement as their birthright.

No, no, it can never be: believe me, if it were otherwise possible that it should be an enduring condition of humanity that there must be one class utterly refined and another utterly brutal, art would bar the way and forbid the monstrosity to exist: such refinement would have to do as well as it might without the aid of Art: it may be she will die, but it cannot be that she will live the slave of the rich, and the token of the enduring slavery of the poor. If the life of the world is to be brutalized by her death, the rich must share that brutalization with the poor.

I know that there are people of good-will now, as there have been in all ages, who have conceived of art as going hand in hand with luxury, nay, as being much the same thing; but it is an idea false from the root up, and most hurtful to art, as I could demonstrate to you by many examples if I had time, lacking which I will only meet it with one, which I hope will be enough.

We are here in the richest city of the richest country of the richest age of the world: no luxury of time past can compare with our luxury; and yet if you could clear your eyes from habitual blindness you would have to confess that there is no crime against art, no ugliness, no vulgarity which is not shared with perfect fairness and equality between the modern hovels of Bethnal Green and the modern palaces of the West End: and then if you looked at the matter deeply and seriously, you would not regret it, but rejoice at it, and as you went past some notable example of the aforesaid palaces you would exult indeed as you said, "So that is all that luxury and money can do for refinement."

For the rest, if of late there has been any change for the better in the prospects of the arts; if there has been a struggle both to throw off the chains of dead and powerless tradition, and to understand the thoughts and aspirations of those among whom those traditions were once alive powerful and beneficent; if there has been abroad any spirit of resistance to the flood of sordid ugliness that modern civilization has created to make modern civilization miserable: in a word, if any of us have had the courage to be discontented that Art seems dying, and to hope for her new birth, it is because others have been discontented and hopeful in other matters than the arts; I believe most sincerely that the steady progress of those whom the stupidity of language forces me to call the lower classes in material, political, and social condition, has been our real help in all that we have been able to do or to hope, although both the helpers and the helped have been mostly unconscious of it.

It is indeed in this belief, the belief in the beneficent pro-

gress of civilization, that I venture to face you and to entreat you to strive to enter into the real meaning of the arts, which are surely the expression of reverence for nature, and the crown of nature, the life of man upon the earth. The Prospects of Architecture

With this intent in view I may, I think, hope to move you, I do not say to agree to all I urge upon you, yet at least to think the matter worth thinking about; and if you once do that, I believe I shall have won you. Maybe indeed that many things which I think beautiful you will deem of small account; nay, that even some things I think base and ugly will not vex your eyes or your minds: but one thing I know you will none of you like to plead guilty to—blindness to the natural beauty of the earth; and of that beauty art is the only possible guardian.

No one of you can fail to know what neglect of art has done to this great treasure of mankind: the earth which was beautiful before man lived on it, which for many ages grew in beauty as men grew in numbers and power, is now growing uglier day by day, and there the swiftest where civilization is the mightiest: this is quite certain; no one can deny it: are you contented that it should be so?

Surely there must be few of us to whom this degrading change has not been brought home personally. I think you will most of you understand me but too well when I ask you to remember the pang of dismay that comes on us when we revisit some spot of country which has been specially sympathetic to us in times past; which has refreshed us after toil, or soothed us after trouble; but where now as we turn the corner of the road or crown the hill's brow we can see first the inevitable blue slate roof, and then the blotched mud-coloured stucco, or ill-built wall of ill-made bricks of the new buildings; then as we come nearer and see the arid and pretentious little gardens, and cast-iron horrors of railings, and miseries of squalid out-houses breaking through the sweet meadows and abundant hedge-rows of our old quiet hamlet, do not our hearts sink within us, and are we not troubled with a perplexity not altogether selfish, when

we think what a little bit of carelessness it takes to destroy a world of pleasure and delight, which now whatever happens can never be recovered?

Well may we feel the perplexity and sickness of heart which some day the whole world shall feel to find its hopes disappointed, if we do not look to it; for this is not what civilization looked for: a new house added to the old village, where is the harm of that? Should it not have been a gain and not a loss; a sign of growth and prosperity which should have rejoiced the eye of an old friend? a new family come in health and hope to share the modest pleasures and labours of the place we loved; that should have been no grief, but a fresh pleasure to us.

Yes, and time was that it would have been so; the new house indeed would have taken away a little piece of the flowery green sward, a few yards of the teeming hedge-row; but a new order, a new beauty would have taken the place of the old: the very flowers of the field would have but given place to flowers fashioned by man's hand and mind: the hedge-row oak would have blossomed into fresh beauty in roof-tree and lintel and door-post: and though the new house would have looked young and trim beside the older houses & the ancient church—ancient even in those days—yet it would have a piece of history for the time to come, and its dear and dainty cream-white walls would have been a genuine link among the numberless links of that long chain whose beginnings we know not of, but on whose mighty length even the many-pillared garth of Pallas, and the stately dome of the Eternal Wisdom, are but single links, wondrous and resplendent though they be.

Such I say can a new house be, such it has been: for 'tis no ideal house I am thinking of: no rare marvel of art, of which but few can ever be vouchsafed to the best times and countries; no palace either, not even a manor-house, but a yeoman's steading at grandest, or even his shepherd's cottage: there they stand at this day, dozens of them yet, in some parts of England: such an one, and of the smallest, is before

my eyes as I speak to you, standing by the roadside on one of the western slopes of the Cotswolds: the tops of the great trees near it can see a long way off the mountains of the Welsh border, and between a great county of hill, and waving woodland, and meadow and plain where lies hidden many a famous battle-field of our stout forefathers: there to the right a wavering patch of blue is the smoke of Worcester town, but Evesham smoke, though near, is unseen, so small it is: then a long line of haze just traceable shows where the Avon wends its way thence towards Severn, till Bredon Hill hides the sight both of it and Tewkesbury smoke: just below on either side the Broadway lie the grey houses of the village street ending with a lovely house of the fourteenth century; above, the road winds serpentine up the steep hill-side, whose crest looking westward sees the glorious map I have been telling of spread before it, but eastward strains to look on Oxfordshire, and thence all waters run towards Thames: all about lie the sunny slopes, lovely of outline, flowery and sweetly grassed, dotted with the best-grown and most graceful of trees: 'tis a beautiful country-side indeed, not undignified, not unromantic, but most familiar.

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And there stands the little house that was new once, a labourer's cottage built of the Cotswold limestone, and grown now, walls and roof, a lovely warm grey, though it was creamy white in its earliest day; no line of it could ever have marred the Cotswold beauty; everything about it is solid and well wrought: it is skilfully planned and well proportioned: there is a little sharp and delicate carving about its arched doorway, and every part of it is well cared for: 'tis in fact beautiful, a work of art and a piece of nature—no less: there is no man who could have done it better considering its use and its place.

Who built it then? No strange race of men, but just the mason of Broadway village: even such a man as is now running up down yonder three or four cottages of the wretched type we know too well: nor did he get an architect from London, or even Worcester, to design it: I believe 'tis but

two hundred years old, and at that time, though beauty still lingered among the peasants' houses, your learned architects were building houses for the high gentry that were ugly enough, though solid and well built; nor are its materials far-fetched; from the neighbouring field came its walling-stones; and at the top of the hill they are quarrying now as good freestone as ever.

No, there was no effort or wonder about it when it was built, though its beauty makes it strange now.

And are you contented that we should lose all this; this simple, harmless beauty that was no hindrance or trouble to any man, and that added to the natural beauty of the earth instead of marring it?

You cannot be contented with it; all you can do is to try to forget it, and to say that such things are the necessary and inevitable consequences of civilization. Is it so indeed? The loss of such-like beauty is an undoubted evil: but civilization cannot mean at heart to produce evils for mankind: such losses therefore must be accidents of civilization, produced by its carelessness, not its malice; and we, if we be men and not machines, must try to amend them: or civilization itself will be undone.

But, now let us leave the sunny slopes of the Cotswolds, and their little grey houses, lest we fall a-dreaming over past time, and let us think about the suburbs of London, neither dull nor unpleasant once, where surely we ought to have some power to do something: let me remind you how it fares with the beauty of the earth when some big house near our dwelling-place, which has passed through many vicissitudes of rich merchant's dwelling, school, hospital, or what not, is at last to be turned into ready money, and is sold to A, who lets it to B, who is going to build houses on it which he will sell to C, who will let them to D and the other letters of the alphabet: well, the old house comes down; that was to be looked for, and perhaps you don't much mind it; it was never a work of art, was stupid and unimaginative enough,

though creditably built, and without pretence; but even while it is being pulled down, you hear the axe falling on the trees of its generous garden, which it was such a pleasure even to pass by, and where man and nature together have worked so long and patiently for the blessing of the neighbours: so you see the boys dragging about the streets great boughs of the flowering may-trees covered with blossom, and you know what is going to happen. Next morning when you get up you look towards that great plane-tree which has been such a friend to you so long through sun and rain and wind, which was a world in itself of incident and beauty: but now there is a gap and no plane-tree; next morning 'tis the turn of the great sweeping layers of darkness that the ancient cedars thrust out from them, very treasures of loveliness and romance; they are gone too: you may have a faint hope left that the thick bank of lilac next your house may be spared, since the newcomers may like lilac; but 'tis gone in the afternoon, and the next day when you look in with a sore heart, you see that once fair great garden turned into a petty miserable clay-trampled yard, and everything is ready for the latest development of Victorian architecture—which in due time (two months) arises from the wreck.

Do you like it? You I mean, who have not studied art and do not think you care about it?

Look at the houses (there are plenty to choose from)! I will not say, are they beautiful, for you say you don't care whether they are or not: but just look at the wretched pennyworths of material, of accommodation, of ornament doled out to you! if there were one touch of generosity, of honest pride, of wish to please about them, I would forgive them in the lump. But there is none—not one.

It is for this that you have sacrificed your cedars and planes and may-trees, which I do believe you really liked—are you satisfied?

Indeed you cannot be: all you can do is to go to your business, converse with your family, eat, drink, and sleep,

and try to forget it, but whenever you think of it, you will admit that a loss without compensation has befallen you and your neighbours.

Once more neglect of art has done it; for though it is conceivable that the loss of your neighbouring open space might in any case have been a loss to you, still the building of a new quarter of a town ought not to be an unmixed calamity to the neighbours: nor would it have been once: for first, the builder doesn't now murder the trees (at any rate not all of them) for the trifling sum of money their corpses will bring him, but because it will take him too much trouble to fit them into the planning of his houses: so to begin with you would have saved the more part of your trees; and I say your trees, advisedly, for they were at least as much your trees, who loved them and would have saved them, as they were the trees of the man who neglected and murdered them. And next, for any space you would have lost, and for any unavoidable destruction of natural growth, you would in the times of art have been compensated by orderly beauty, by visible signs of the ingenuity of man and his delight both in the works of nature and the works of his own hands.

Yes indeed, if we had lived in Venice in early days, as islet after islet was built upon, we should have grudged it but little, I think, though we had been merchants and rich men, that the Greek shafted work, and the carving of the Lombards was drawn nearer and nearer to us and blocked us out a little from the sight of the blue Euganean hills or the Northern mountains. Nay, to come nearer home, much as I know I should have loved the willowy meadows between the network of the streams of Thames and Cherwell; yet I should not have been ill content as Oxford crept northward from its early home of Oseney, and Rewley, and the Castle, as townsman's house, and scholar's hall, and the great College and the noble Church hid year by year more and more of the grass and flowers of Oxfordshire.*

That was the natural course of things then; men could do

* Indeed it is a new world now, when the new Cowley dog-holes must needs slay Magdalen Bridge!—*Nov.* 1881.

no otherwise when they built than give some gift of beauty to the world: but all is turned inside out now, and when men build they cannot but take away some gift of beauty, which Nature or their own forefathers have given to the world.

Wonderful it is indeed, and perplexing, that the course of civilization towards perfection should have brought this about: so perplexing, that to some it seems as if civilization were eating her own children, and the arts first of all.

I will not say that; time is big with so many a change; surely there must be some remedy, and whether there be or no, at least it is better to die seeking one, than to leave it alone and do nothing.

I have said, are you satisfied? and assumed that you are not, though to many you may seem to be at least helpless: yet indeed it is something or even a great deal that I can reasonably assume that you are discontented: fifty years ago, thirty years ago, nay perhaps twenty years ago, it would have been useless to have asked such a question, it could only have been answered in one way: We are perfectly satisfied: whereas now we may at least hope that discontent will grow till some remedy will be sought for.

And if sought for, should it not, in England at least, be as good as found already, and acted upon? At first sight it seems so truly; for I may say without fear of contradiction that we of the English middle classes are the most powerful body of men that the world has yet seen, and that anything we have set our heart upon we will have: and yet when we come to look the matter in the face, we cannot fail to see that even for us with all our strength it will be a hard matter to bring about that birth of the new art: for between us and that which is to be, if art is not to perish utterly, there is something alive and devouring; something as it were a river of fire that will put all that tries to swim across to a hard proof indeed, and scare from the plunge every soul that is not made fearless by desire of truth and insight of the happy days to come beyond.

That fire is the hurry of life bred by the gradual perfec-

tion of competitive commerce which we, the English middle classes, when we had won our political liberty, set ourselves to further with an energy, an eagerness, a single-heartedness that has no parallel in history; we would suffer none to bar the way to us, we called on none to help us, we thought of that one thing and forgot all else, and so attained to our desire, and fashioned a terrible thing indeed from the very hearts of the strongest of mankind.

Indeed I don't suppose that the feeble discontent with our own creation that I have noted before can deal with such a force as this—not yet—not till it swells to very strong discontent: nevertheless as we were blind to its destructive power, and have not even yet learned all about that, so we may well be blind to what it has of constructive force in it, and that one day may give us a chance to deal with it again and turn it toward accomplishing our new and worthier desire: in that day at least, when we have at last learned what we want, let us work no less strenuously and fearlessly, I will not say to quench it, but to force it to burn itself out, as we once did to quicken and sustain it.

Meantime if we could but get ourselves ready by casting off certain old prejudices and delusions in this matter of the arts, we should the sooner reach the pitch of discontent which would drive us into action: such a one I mean as the aforesaid idea that luxury fosters art, and especially the Architectural arts; or its companion one, that the arts flourish best in a rich country, *i.e.* a country where the contrast between rich and poor is greatest; or this, the worst because the most plausible, the assertion of the hierarchy of intellect in the arts: an old foe with a new face indeed: born out of the times that gave the death-blow to the political and social hierarchies, and waxing as they waned, it proclaimed from a new side the divinity of the few and the subjugation of the many, and cries out, like they did, that it is expedient, not that one man should die for the people, but that the people should die for one man.

Now perhaps these three things, though they have differ-

ent forms, are in fact but one thing; tyranny to wit: but however that may be, they are to be met by one answer, and there is no other: if art which is now sick is to live and not die, it must in the future be of the people for the people, and by the people; it must understand all and be understood by all: equality must be the answer to tyranny: if that be not attained, art will die. The Prospects of Architecture

The past art of what has grown to be civilized Europe from the time of the decline of the ancient classical peoples, was the outcome of instinct working on an unbroken chain of tradition: it was fed not by knowledge but by hope, and though many a strange and wild illusion mingled with that hope, yet was it human and fruitful ever: many a man it solaced, many a slave in body it freed in soul; boundless pleasure it gave to those who wrought it and those who used it: long and long it lived, passing that torch of hope from hand to hand, while it kept but little record of its best and noblest; for least of all things could it abide to make for itself kings and tyrants: every man's hand and soul it used, the lowest as the highest, and in its bosom at least were all men free: it did its work, not creating an art more perfect than itself, but rather other things than art, freedom of thought and speech, and the longing for light and knowledge and the coming days that should slay it: and so at last it died in the hour of its highest hope, almost before the greatest men that came of it had passed away from the world. It is dead now; no longing will bring it back to us; no echo of it is left among the peoples whom it once made happy.

Of the art that is to come who may prophesy? But this at least seems to follow from comparing that past with the confusion in which we are now struggling and the light which glimmers through it: that that art will no longer be an art of instinct, of ignorance which is hopeful to learn and strives to see; since ignorance is now no longer hopeful. In this and in many other ways it may differ from the past art, but in one thing it must needs be like it: it will not be an esoteric mystery shared by a little band of superior beings; it will be no

more hierarchical than the art of past time was, but like it will be a gift of the people to the people, a thing which everybody can understand, and everyone surround with love; it will be a part of every life, and a hindrance to none.

For this is the essence of art, and the thing that is eternal to it, whatever else may be passing and accidental.

Here it is, you see, wherein the art of to-day is so far astray, would that I could say wherein it *has been* astray; it has been sick because of this packing and peeling with tyranny, and now with what of life it has it must struggle back towards equality.

There is the hard business for us! to get all simple people to care about art, to get them to insist on making it part of their lives, whatever becomes of systems of commerce and labour held perfect by some of us.

This is henceforward for a long time to come the real business of art: and—yes I will say it since I think it—of civilization too for that matter: but how shall we set to work about it? How shall we give people without traditions of art eyes with which to see the works we do to move them? How shall we give them leisure from toil, and truce with anxiety, so that they may have time to brood over the longing for beauty which men are born with, as 'tis said, even in London streets? And chiefly, for this will breed the others swiftly and certainly, how shall we give them hope and pleasure in their daily work?

How shall we give them this soul of art without which men are worse than savages? If they would but drive us to it! But what and where are the forces that shall drive them to drive us? Where is the lever and the standpoint?

Hard questions indeed! but unless we are prepared to seek an answer for them, our art is a mere toy, which may amuse us for a little, but which will not sustain us at our need: the cultivated classes, as they are called, will feel it slipping away from under them: till some of them will but mock it as a worthless thing; and some will stand by and look at it as a curious exercise of the intellect, useless when done, though

amusing to watch a-doing. How long will art live on those terms? Yet such were even now the state of art were it not for that hope which I am here to set forth to you, the hope of an art that shall express the soul of the people. The Prospects of Architecture

Therefore, I say, that in these days we men of civilization have to choose if we will cast art aside or not; if we choose to do so I have no more to say, save that we *may* find something to take its place for the solace and joy of mankind, but I scarce think we shall: but if we refuse to cast art aside, then must we seek an answer for those hard questions aforesaid, of which this is the first.

How shall we set about giving people without traditions of art eyes with which to see works of art? It will doubtless take many years of striving and success before we can think of answering that question fully: and if we strive to do our duty herein, long before it is answered fully there will be some kind of a popular art abiding among us: but meantime, and setting aside the answer which every artist must make to his own share of the question, there is one duty obvious to us all; it is that we should set ourselves, each one of us, to doing our best to guard the natural beauty of the earth: we ought to look upon it as a crime, an injury to our fellows, only excusable because of ignorance, to mar the natural beauty which is the property of all men; and scarce less than a crime to look on and do nothing while others are marring it, if we can no longer plead this ignorance.

Now this duty, as it is the most obvious to us, and the first and readiest way of giving people back their eyes, so happily it is the easiest to set about; up to a certain point you will have all people of good will to the public good on your side: nay, small as the beginning is, something has actually been begun in this direction, and we may well say, considering how hopeless things looked twenty years ago, that it is marvellous in our eyes! Yet if we ever get out of the troubles that we are now wallowing in, it will seem perhaps more marvellous still to those that come after us that the dwellers in the richest city in the world were at one

time rather proud that the members of a small, humble, and rather obscure, though I will say it, a beneficent society, should have felt it their duty to shut their eyes to the apparent hopelessness of attacking with their feeble means the stupendous evils they had become alive to, so that they might be able to make some small beginnings towards awakening the general public to a due sense of those evils.

I say, that though I ask your earnest support for such associations as the Kyrle and the Commons Preservation Societies, and though I feel sure that they have begun at the right end, since neither gods nor governments will help those who don't help themselves; though we are bound to wait for nobody's help than our own in dealing with the devouring hideousness and squalor of our great towns, and especially of London, for which the whole country is responsible; yet it would be idle not to acknowledge that the difficulties in our way are far too huge and wide-spreading to be grappled by private or semi-private efforts only.

All we can do in this way we must look on not as palliatives of an unendurable state of things, but as tokens of what we desire; which is in short the giving back to our country of the natural beauty of the earth, which we are so ashamed of having taken away from it: and our chief duty herein will be to quicken this shame and the pain that comes from it in the hearts of our fellows: this I say is one of the chief duties of all those who have any right to the title of cultivated men: and I believe that if we are faithful to it, we may help to further a great impulse towards beauty among us, which will be so irresistible that it will fashion for itself a national machinery which will sweep away all difficulties between us and a decent life, though they may have increased a thousand-fold meantime, as is only too like to be the case.

Surely that light will arise, though neither we nor our children's children see it, though civilization may have to go down into dark places enough meantime: surely one day

making will be thought more honourable, more worthy the majesty of a great nation than destruction.

It is strange indeed, it is woeful, it is scarcely comprehensible, if we come to think of it as men, and not as machines, that, after all the progress of civilization, it should be so easy for a little official talk, a few lines on a sheet of paper, to set a terrible engine to work, which without any trouble on our part will slay us ten thousand men, and ruin who can say how many thousand of families; and it lies light enough on the conscience of *all* of us; while, if it is a question of striking a blow at grievous and crushing evils which lie at our own doors, evils which every thoughtful man feels and laments, and for which we alone are responsible, not only is there no national machinery for dealing with them, though they grow ranker and ranker every year, but any hint that such a thing may be possible is received with laughter or with terror, or with severe and heavy blame. The rights of property, the necessities of morality, the interests of religion—these are the sacramental words of cowardice that silence us!

Sirs, I have spoken of thoughtful men who feel these evils: but think of all the millions of men whom our civilization has bred, who are not thoughtful, and have had no chance of being so; how can you fail then to acknowledge the duty of defending the fairness of the Earth? and what is the use of our cultivation if it is to cultivate us into cowards? Let us answer those feeble counsels of despair and say, We also have a property which your tyranny of squalor cheats us of; we also have a morality which its baseness crushes; we also have a religion which its injustice makes a mock of.

Well, whatever lesser helps there may be to our endeavour of giving people back the eyes we have robbed them of, we may pass them by at present, for they are chiefly of use to people who are beginning to get their eyesight again; to people who, though they have no traditions of art, can study those mighty impulses that once led nations and races: it is

to such that museums and art education are of service; but it is clear they cannot get at the great mass of people, who will at present stare at them in unintelligent wonder.

Until our streets are decent and orderly, and our town gardens break the bricks and mortar every here and there, and are open to all people; until our meadows even near our towns become fair and sweet, and are unspoiled by patches of hideousness; until we have clear sky above our heads and green grass beneath our feet; until the great drama of the seasons can touch our workmen with other feelings than the misery of winter and the weariness of summer—till all this happens our museums and art schools will be but amusements of the rich; and they will soon cease to be of any use to them also, unless they make up their minds that they will do their best to give us back the fairness of the Earth.

In what I have been saying on this last point I have been thinking of our own special duties as cultivated people; but in our endeavours towards this end, as in all others, cultivated people cannot stand alone; nor can we do much to open people's eyes till they cry out to us to have them opened. Now I cannot doubt that the longing to attack and overcome the sordidness of the city life of to-day still dwells in the minds of workmen, as well as in ours, but it can scarcely be otherwise than vague and lacking guidance with men who have so little leisure, and are so hemmed in with hideousness as they are. So this brings us to our second question: How shall people in general get leisure enough from toil, and truce enough with anxiety to give scope to their inborn longing for beauty?

Now the part of this question that is not involved in the next one, How shall they get proper work to do? is I think in a fair way to be answered.

The mighty change which the success of competitive commerce has wrought in the world, whatever it may have destroyed, has at least unwittingly made one thing—from out of it has been born the increasing power of the working-class. The determination which this power has bred in it to

raise their class as a class will, I doubt not, make way and prosper with our goodwill, or even in spite of it; but it seems to me that both to the working-class and especially to ourselves it is important that it should have our abundant goodwill, and also what help we may be able otherwise to give it, by our determination to deal fairly with workmen, even when that justice may seem to involve our own loss. The time of unreasonable and blind outcry against the Trades Unions is, I am happy to think, gone by, and has given place to the hope of a time when these great Associations, well organized, well served, and earnestly supported, as I *know* them to be, will find other work before them than the temporary support of their members and the adjustment of due wages for their crafts: when that hope begins to be realized, and they find they can make use of the help of us scattered units of the cultivated classes, I feel sure that the claims of art, as we and they will then understand the word, will by no means be disregarded by them.

Meantime with us who are called artists, since most unhappily that word means at present another thing than artisan: with us who either practise the arts with our own hands, or who love them so wholly that we can enter into the inmost feelings of those who do—with us it lies to deal with our last question, to stir up others to think of answering this: How shall we give people in general hope and pleasure in their daily work in such a way that in those days to come the word art *shall* be rightly understood?

Of all that I have to say to you this seems to me the most important—that our daily and necessary work, which we could not escape if we would, which we would not forego if we could, should be human, serious, and pleasurable, not machine-like, trivial, or grievous. I call this not only the very foundation of Architecture in all senses of the word, but of happiness also in all conditions of life.

Let me say before I go further, that though I am nowise ashamed of repeating the words of men who have been before me in both senses, of time and insight, I mean, I

should be ashamed of letting you think that I forget their labours on which mine are founded. I know that the pith of what I am saying on this subject was set forth years ago and for the first time by Mr. Ruskin in that chapter of the Stones of Venice which is entitled, "On the Nature of Gothic," in words more clear and eloquent than any man else now living could use. So important do they seem to me, that to my mind they should have been posted up in every school of art throughout the country—nay, in every association of English-speaking people which professes in any way to further the culture of mankind. But I am sorry to have to say it, my excuse for doing little more now than repeating those words is that they have been less heeded than most things which Mr. Ruskin has said: I suppose because people have been afraid of them, lest they should find the truth they express sticking so fast in their minds that it would either compel them to act on it or confess themselves slothful and cowardly.

Nor can I pretend to wonder at that: for if people were once to accept it as true, that it is nothing but just and fair that every man's work should have some hope and pleasure always present in it, they must try to bring the change about that would make it so: and all history tells of no greater change in man's life than that would be.

Nevertheless, great as the change may be, Architecture has no prospects in civilization unless the change be brought about: and 'tis my business to-day, I will not say to convince you of this, but to send some of you away uneasy lest perhaps it may be true; if I can manage that I shall have spoken to some purpose.

Let us see however in what light cultivated people, men not without serious thoughts about life, look to this matter, lest perchance we may seem to be beating the air only: when I have given you an example of this way of thinking, I will answer it to the best of my power in the hopes of making some of you uneasy, discontented, and revolutionary.

Some few months ago I read in a paper the report of a speech made to the assembled workpeople of a famous firm of manufacturers (as they are called). The speech was a very humane and thoughtful one, spoken by one of the leaders of modern thought: the firm to whose people it was addressed was and is famous not only for successful commerce, but also for the consideration and goodwill with which it treats its work-people, men and women. No wonder, therefore, that the speech was pleasant reading; for the tone of it was that of a man speaking to his friends who could well understand him and from whom he need hide nothing; but towards the end of it I came across a sentence, which set me a-thinking so hard, that I forgot all that had gone before. It was to this effect, and I think nearly in these very words, "Since no man would work if it were not that he hoped by working to earn leisure:" and the context showed that this was assumed as a self-evident truth.

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Well, for many years I have had my mind fixed on what I in my turn regarded as an axiom which may be worded thus: No work which cannot be done without pleasure in the doing is worth doing; so you may think I was much disturbed at a grave and learned man taking such a completely different view of it with such calmness of certainty. What a little way, I thought, has all Ruskin's fire and eloquence made in driving into people so great a truth, a truth so fertile of consequences!

Then I turned the intrusive sentence over again in my mind: "No man would work unless he hoped by working to earn leisure:" and I saw that this was another way of putting it: first, all the work of the world is done against the grain: second, what a man does in his "leisure" is not work.

A poor bribe the hope of such leisure to supplement the other inducement to toil, which I take to be the fear of death by starvation: a poor bribe; for the most of men, like those Yorkshire weavers and spinners (and the more part far

worse than they) work for such a very small share of leisure that one must needs say that if all their hope be in that, they are pretty much beguiled of their hope!

So I thought, and this next, that if it were indeed true and beyond remedy, that no man would work unless he hoped by working to earn leisure, the hell of theologians was but little needed; for a thickly populated civilized country, where, you know, after all people must work at something, would serve their turn well enough. Yet again I knew that this theory of the general and necessary hatefulness of work was indeed the common one, and that all sorts of people held it, who without being monsters of insensibility grew fat and jolly nevertheless.

So to explain this puzzle, I fell to thinking of the one life of which I knew something—my own to wit—and out tumbled the bottom of the theory.

For I tried to think what would happen to me if I were forbidden my ordinary daily work; and I knew that I should die of despair and weariness, unless I could straightway take to something else which I could make my daily work: and it was clear to me that I worked not in the least in the world for the sake of earning leisure by it, but partly driven by the fear of starvation or disgrace, and partly, and even a very great deal, because I love the work itself: and as for my leisure: well I had to confess that part of it I do indeed spend as a dog does—in contemplation, let us say; and like it well enough: but part of it also I spend in work: which work gives me just as much pleasure as my bread-earning work —neither more nor less; and therefore could be no bribe or hope for my work-a-day hours.

Then next I turned my thoughts to my friends: mere artists, and therefore, you know, lazy people by prescriptive right: I found that the one thing they enjoyed was their work, and that their only idea of happy leisure was other work, just as valuable to the world as their work-a-day work: they only differed from me in liking the dog-like leisure less and the man-like labour more than I do.

I got no further when I turned from mere artists to important men—public men: I could see no signs of their working merely to earn leisure: they all worked for the work and the deeds' sake. Do rich gentlemen sit up all night in the House of Commons for the sake of earning leisure? if so, 'tis a sad waste of labour. Or Mr. Gladstone? he doesn't seem to have succeeded in winning much leisure by tolerably strenuous work; what he does get he might have got on much easier terms, I am sure. The Prospects of Architecture

Does it then come to this, that there are men, say a class of men, whose daily work, though maybe they cannot escape from doing it, is chiefly pleasure to them; and other classes of men whose daily work is wholly irksome to them, and only endurable because they hope while they are about it to earn thereby a little leisure at the day's end?

If that were wholly true the contrast between the two kinds of lives would be greater than the contrast between the utmost delicacy of life and the utmost hardship could show, or between the utmost calm and utmost trouble. The difference would be literally immeasurable.

But I dare not, if I would, in so serious a matter overstate the evils I call on you to attack: it is not wholly true that such immeasurable difference exists between the lives of divers classes of men, or the world would scarce have got through to past the middle of this century: misery, grudging, and tyranny would have destroyed us all.

The inequality even at the worst is not really so great as that: any employment in which a thing can be done better or worse has some pleasure in it, for all men more or less like doing what they can do well: even mechanical labour is pleasant to some people (to me amongst others) if it be not too mechanical.

Nevertheless though it be not wholly true that the daily work of some men is merely pleasant and of others merely grievous; yet it is over true both that things are not very far short of this, and also that if people do not open their eyes in time they will speedily worsen. Some work, nay,

almost all the work done by artisans *is* too mechanical; and those that work at it must either abstract their thoughts from it altogether, in which case they are but machines while they are at work; or else they must suffer such dreadful weariness in getting through it, as one can scarcely bear to think of. Nature desires that we shall at least live, but seldom, I suppose, allows this latter misery to happen; and the workmen who do purely mechanical work do as a rule become mere machines as far as their work is concerned. Now as I am quite sure that no art, not even the feeblest, rudest, or least intelligent, can come of such work, so also I am sure that such work makes the workman less than a man and degrades him grievously and unjustly, and that nothing can compensate him or us for such degradation: and I want you specially to note that this was instinctively felt in the very earliest days of what are called the industrial arts. When a man turned the wheel, or threw the shuttle, or hammered the iron, he was expected to make something more than a water-pot, a cloth, or a knife: he was expected to make a work of art also: he could scarcely altogether fail in this, he might attain to making a work of the greatest beauty: this was felt to be positively necessary to the peace of mind both of the maker and the user; and this is it which I have called Architecture: the turning of necessary articles of daily use into works of art.

Certainly, when we come to think of it thus, there does seem to be little less than that immeasurable contrast above mentioned between such work and mechanical work: and most assuredly do I believe that the crafts which fashion our familiar wares need this enlightenment of happiness no less now than they did in the days of the early Pharaohs: but we have forgotten this necessity, and in consequence have reduced handicraft to such degradation, that a learned, thoughtful, and humane man can set forth as an axiom that no man will work except to earn leisure thereby.

But now let us forget any conventional ways of looking at the labour which produces the matters of our daily life,

which ways come partly from the wretched state of the arts in modern times, and partly I suppose from that repulsion to handicraft which seems to have beset some minds in all ages: let us forget this, and try to think how it really fares with the divers ways of work in handicrafts. The Prospects of Architecture

I think one may divide the work with which Architecture is conversant into three classes: first there is the purely mechanical: those who do this are machines only, and the less they think of what they are doing the better for the purpose, supposing they are properly drilled: the purpose of this work, to speak plainly, is not the making of wares of any kind, but what on the one hand is called employment, on the other what is called money-making: that is to say, in other words, the multiplication of the species of the mechanical workman, and the increase of the riches of the man who sets him to work, called in our modern jargon by a strange perversion of language, a manufacturer:* Let us call this kind of work Mechanical Toil.

The second kind is more or less mechanical as the case may be; but it can always be done better or worse: if it is to be well done, it claims attention from the workman, and he must leave on it signs of his individuality: there will be more or less of art in it, over which the workman has at least some control; and he will work on it partly to earn his bread in not too toilsome or disgusting a way, but in a way which makes even his work-hours pass pleasantly to him, and partly to make wares, which when made will be a distinct gain to the world; things that will be praised and delighted in. This work I would call Intelligent Work.

The third kind of work has but little if anything mechanical about it; it is altogether individual; that is to say, that what any man does by means of it could never have been done by any other man. Properly speaking, this work is all pleasure: true, there are pains and perplexities and weariness in it, but they are like the troubles of a beautiful

* Or, to put it plainer still, the unlimited breeding of mechanical workmen as *mechanical workmen*, not as *men*.

life; the dark places that make the bright ones brighter: they are the romance of the work and do but elevate the workman, not depress him: I would call this Imaginative Work.

Now I can fancy that at first sight it may seem to you as if there were more difference between this last and Intelligent Work, than between Intelligent Work and Mechanical Toil: but 'tis not so. The difference between these two is the difference between light and darkness, between Ormuzd and Ahriman: whereas the difference between Intelligent work and what for want of a better word I am calling Imaginative work, is a matter of degree only; and in times when art is abundant and noble there is no break in the chain from the humblest of the lower to the greatest of the higher class; from the poor weaver who chuckles as the bright colour comes round again, to the great painter anxious and doubtful if he can give to the world the whole of his thought or only nine-tenths of it, they are all artists—that is men; while the mechanical workman, who does not note the difference between bright and dull in his colours, but only knows them by numbers, is, while he is at his work, no man, but a machine. Indeed when Intelligent work coexists with Imaginative, there is no hard and fast line between them; in the very best and happiest times of art, there is scarce any Intelligent work which is not Imaginative also; and there is but little of effort or doubt, or sign of unexpressed desires even in the highest of the Imaginative work: the blessing of Equality elevates the lesser, and calms the greater, art.

Now further, Mechanical Toil is bred of that hurry and thoughtlessness of civilization of which, as aforesaid, the middle classes of this country have been such powerful furtherers: on the face of it it is hostile to civilization, a curse that civilization has made for itself and can no longer think of abolishing or controlling: such it seems, I say; but since it bears with it change and tremendous change, it may well be that there is something more than mere loss in it: it will full surely destroy art as we know art, unless art new-

born destroy it: yet belike at the worst it will destroy other things beside which are the poison of art, and in the long run itself also, and thus make way for the new art, of whose form we know nothing. The Prospects of Architecture

Intelligent work is the child of struggling, hopeful, progressive civilization: and its office is to add fresh interest to simple and uneventful lives, to soothe discontent with innocent pleasure fertile of deeds gainful to mankind; to bless the many toiling millions with hope daily recurring, and which it will by no means disappoint.

Imaginative work is the very blossom of civilization triumphant and hopeful; it would fain lead men to aspire towards perfection: each hope that it fulfils gives birth to yet another hope: it bears in its bosom the worth and the meaning of life and the counsel to strive to understand everything; to fear nothing and to hate nothing: in a word, 'tis the symbol and sacrament of the Courage of the World.

Now thus it stands to-day with these three kinds of work: Mechanical Toil has swallowed Intelligent Work and all the lower part of Imaginative Work, and the enormous mass of the very worst now confronts the slender but still bright array of the very best: what is left of art is rallied to its citadel of the highest intellectual art, and stands at bay there.

At first sight its hope of victory is slender indeed; yet to us now living it seems as if man had not yet lost all that part of his soul which longs for beauty: nay we cannot but hope that it is not yet dying. If we are not deceived in that hope, if the art of to-day has really come alive out of the slough of despond which we call the eighteenth century, it will surely grow and gather strength and draw to it other forms of intellect and hope that now scarcely know it; and then, whatever changes it may go through, it will at the last be victorious and bring abundant content to mankind. On the other hand, if, as some think, it be but the reflection and feeble ghost of that glorious autumn which ended the good days of the mighty art of the Middle Ages, it will take but little killing:

Mechanical Toil will sweep over all the handiwork of man, and art will be gone.

I myself am too busy a man to trouble myself much as to what may happen after that: I can only say that if you do not like the thought of that dull blank, even if you know or care little for art, do not cast the thought of it aside, but think of it again and again, and cherish the trouble it breeds till such a future seems unendurable to you; and then make up your minds that you will not bear it; and even if you distrust the artists that now are, set yourself to clear the way for the artists that are to come. We shall not count you among our enemies then, however hardly you deal with us.

I have spoken of one most important part of that task; I have prayed you to set yourselves earnestly to protecting what is left, and recovering what is lost of the Natural Fairness of the Earth: no less I pray you to do what you may to raise up some firm ground amid the great flood of mechanical toil, to make an effort to win human and hopeful work for yourselves and your fellows.

But if our first task of guarding the beauty of the Earth was hard, this is far harder, nor can I pretend to think that we can attack our enemy directly; yet indirectly surely something may be done, or at least the foundations laid for something.

For Art breeds Art, and every worthy work done and delighted in by maker and user begets a longing for more: and since art cannot be fashioned by mechanical toil, the demand for real art will mean a demand for intelligent work, which if persisted in will in time create its due supply—at least I hope so.

I believe that what I am now saying will be well understood by those who really care about art, but to speak plainly I know that these are rarely to be found even among the cultivated classes: it must be confessed that the middle classes of our civilization have embraced luxury instead of art, and that we are even so blindly base as to hug ourselves on it, and to insult the memory of valiant people of past

times and to mock at them because they were not encumbered with the nuisances that foolish habit has made us look on as necessaries. Be sure that we are not beginning to prepare for the art that is to be, till we have swept all that out of our minds, and are setting to work to rid ourselves of all the useless luxuries (by some called comforts) that make our stuffy art-stifling houses more truly savage than a Zulu's kraal or an East Greenlander's snow hut.

I feel sure that many a man is longing to set his hand to this if he only durst; I believe that there are simple people who think that they are dull to art, and who are really only perplexed and wearied by finery and rubbish: if not from these, 'tis at least from the children of these that we may look for the beginnings of the building up of the art that is to be.

Meanwhile, I say, till the beginning of new construction is obvious, let us be at least destructive of the sham art: it is full surely one of the curses of modern life, that if people have not time and eyes to discern or money to buy the real object of their desire, they must needs have its mechanical substitute. On this lazy and cowardly habit feeds and grows and flourishes mechanical toil and all the slavery of mind and body it brings with it: from this stupidity are born the itch of the public to over-reach the tradesmen they deal with, the determination (usually successful) of the tradesmen to over-reach them, and all the mockery and flouting that has been cast of late (not without reason) on the British tradesman and the British workman—men just as honest as ourselves, if we would not compel them to cheat us, and reward them for doing it.

Now if the public knew anything of art, that is excellence in things made by man, they would not abide the shams of it; and if the real thing were not to be had, they would learn to do without, nor think their gentility injured by the forbearance.

Simplicity of life, even the barest, is not a misery, but the very foundation of refinement: a sanded floor and white-

washed walls, and the green trees and flowery meads and living waters outside; or a grimy palace amid the smoke with a regiment of housemaids always working to smear the dirt together so that it may be unnoticed; which, think you, is the most refined, the most fit for a gentleman of those two dwellings?

So I say, if you cannot learn to love real art, at least learn to hate sham art and reject it. It is not so much because the wretched thing is so ugly and silly and useless that I ask you to cast it from you; it is much more because these are but the outward symbols of the poison that lies within them: look through them and see all that has gone to their fashioning, and you will see how vain labour, and sorrow, and disgrace have been their companions from the first—and all this for trifles that no man really needs!

Learn to do without: there is virtue in those words; a force that rightly used would choke both demand and supply of Mechanical Toil: would make it stick to its last—the making of machines.

And then from simplicity of life would rise up the longing for beauty, which cannot yet be dead in men's souls, and we know that nothing can satisfy that demand but Intelligent work rising gradually into Imaginative work; which will turn all "operatives" into workmen, into artists, into men.

Now, I have been trying to show you how the hurry of modern Civilization, accompanied by the tyrannous Organization of labour which was a necessity to the full development of Competitive Commerce, has taken from the people at large, gentle and simple, the eyes to discern and the hands to fashion that popular art which was once the chief solace and joy of the world: I have asked you to think of that as no light matter, but a grievous mishap: I have prayed you to strive to remedy this evil: first by guarding jealously what is left, and by trying earnestly to win back what is lost of the Fairness of the Earth; and next by rejecting luxury, that you may embrace art, if you can, or if indeed you in your

short lives cannot learn what art means, that you may at least live a simple life fit for men.

And in all I have been saying, what I have been really urging on you is this—Reverence for the life of Man upon the Earth: let the past be past, every whit of it that is not still living in us: let the dead bury their dead, but let us turn to the living, and with boundless courage and what hope we may, refuse to let the Earth be joyless in the days to come.

What lies before us of hope or fear for this? Well, let us remember that those past days whose art was so worthy, did nevertheless forget much of what was due to the Life of Man upon the Earth; and so belike it was to revenge this neglect that art was delivered to our hands for maiming: to us, who were blinded by our eager chase of those things which our forefathers had neglected, and by the chase of other things which seemed revealed to us on our hurried way, not seldom, it may be for our beguiling.

And of that to which we were blinded, not all was unworthy: nay the most of it was deep-rooted in men's souls, and was a necessary part of their Life upon the Earth, and claims our reverence still: let us add this knowledge to our other knowledge: and there will still be a future for the arts. Let us remember this, and amid simplicity of life turn our eyes to real beauty that can be shared by all: and then though the days worsen, and no rag of the elder art be left for our teaching, yet the new art may yet arise among us, and even if it have the hands of a child together with the heart of a troubled man, still it may bear on for us to better times the tokens of our reverence for the Life of Man upon the Earth. For we indeed freed from the bondage of foolish habit and dulling luxury might at last have eyes wherewith to see: and should have to babble to one another many things of our joy in the life around us: the faces of people in the streets bearing the tokens of mirth and sorrow and hope, and all the tale of their lives: the scraps of nature the busiest of us would come across; birds and beasts and the little worlds they live in; and even in the very town the sky

above us and the drift of the clouds across it; the wind's hand on the slim trees, and its voice amid their branches, and all the ever-recurring deeds of nature; nor would the road or the river winding past our homes fail to tell us stories of the country-side, and men's doings in field and fell. And whiles we should fall to muse on the times when all the ways of nature were mere wonders to men, yet so well beloved of them that they called them by men's names and gave them deeds of men to do; and many a time there would come before us memories of the deeds of past times, and of the aspirations of those mighty peoples whose deaths have made our lives, and their sorrows our joys.

How could we keep silence of all this? and what voice could tell it but the voice of Art: and what audience for such a tale would content us but all men living on the Earth?

This is what Architecture hopes to be: it will have this life, or else death; and it is for us now living between the past and the future to say whether it shall live or die.

LECTURES ON ART AND INDUSTRY

ART AND THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH. A LECTURE DELIVERED AT BURSLEM TOWN HALL ON OCTOBER 13, 1881.

WE are here in the midst of a population busied about a craft which may be called the most ancient in the world, a craft which I look upon with the greatest interest, as I well may, since, except perhaps the noble craft of house-building, it is second to none other. And in the midst of this industrious population, engaged in making goods of such importance to our households, I am speaking to a School of Art, one of the bodies that were founded all over the country at a time when it was felt there was something wrong as between the two elements that go to make anything which can be correctly described as a work of industrial art, namely the utilitarian and the artistic elements. I hope nothing I may say to-night will make you think that I under-value the importance of these places of instruction; on the contrary, I believe them to be necessary to us, unless we are prepared to give up all attempt to unite these two elements of use and beauty.

Now, though no man can be more impressed with the importance of the art of pottery than I am, and though I have not, I hope, neglected the study of it from the artistic or historico-artistic side, I do not think myself bound to follow up the subject of your especial art; not so much because I know no more of the technical side of it than I have thought enough to enable me to understand it from the above-said historico-artistic side; but rather because I feel it almost impossible to dissociate one of the ornamental arts from the others, as things go now-a-days. Neither do I think I should interest you much, still less instruct you, if I were to recapitulate the general rules that ought to guide a designer for the industrial arts; at the very first foundation of these schools the instructors in them formulated those rules clearly and satisfactorily, and I think they have since been accepted generally, at least in theory. What I do really feel myself

bound to do is to speak to you of certain things that are never absent from my thoughts, certain considerations on the condition and prospects of the arts in general, the neglect of which conditions would drive us in time into a strange state of things indeed; a state of things under which no potter would put any decoration on his pots, and indeed, if a man of strict logical mind, would never know of what shape to make a pot, unless the actual use it was to be put to drove him in one direction or another. What I have to say on these matters will not, I fear, be very new to you, and perhaps it may more or less offend you; but I will beg you to believe that I feel deeply the honour you have done me in asking me to address you. I cannot doubt you have asked me to do so that you might hear what I may chance to think on the subject of the arts, and it seems to me, therefore, that I should ill repay you for that honour, and be treating you unworthily, if I were to stand here and tell you at great length what I do not think. So I will ask your leave and license to speak plainly, as I promise I will not speak lightly.

Yet I would not have you think I underrate the difficulty of the art of plain speaking, an art as difficult, perhaps, as that of pottery, and not nearly so much of it done in the world; so what I will ask you to forgive me if I wound your feelings in any way will not be my downright meaning, my audacious and rash thought, but rather my clumsy way of expressing it; and in truth I expect to have your forgiveness, since in my heart I believe that a plain word spoken because it must be said, free from malice or self-seeking, can be no lasting offence to any one, whereas, what end is there to the wrong and damage that come of half-hearted speech, of words spoken in vagueness, hypocrisy, and cowardice?

You who in these parts make such hard, smooth, well-compacted, and enduring pottery understand well that you must give it other qualities besides those which make it fit for ordinary use. You must profess to make it beautiful as well as useful, and if you did not you would certainly lose your market. That has been the view the world has taken of

your art, and of all the industrial arts since the beginning of history, and, as I said, is held to this day, whether from the force of habit or otherwise.

Nevertheless, so different is the position of art in our daily lives from what it used to be that it seems to me (and I am not alone in my thought), that the world is hesitating as to whether it shall take art home to it or cast it out.

I feel that I am bound to explain what may seem a very startling as it is assuredly a very serious statement. I will do so in as few words as I can. I do not know whether a sense of the great change which has befallen the arts in modern times has come home to most, or indeed to many, of you: a change which has only culminated in quite recent times within the lives of many of you present. It may seem to you that there has been no break in the chain of art, at all events since it began to struggle out of the confusion and barbarism of the early middle ages; you may think that there has been gradual change in it, growth, improvement (not always perhaps readily recognized at first, that latter), but that all this has taken place without violence or breakdown, and that the growth and improvement are still going on.

And this seems a very reasonable view to take of it, and is analogous beyond doubt to what has happened on other sides of human progress; nay, it is on this ground that your pleasure in art is founded, and your hopes for its future. That foundation for hope has failed some of us; on what our hopes are founded to-day I may be able to tell you partly this evening, but I will now give you a glimpse of the abyss into which our earlier hope tumbled.

Let us look back a little to the early middle ages, the days of barbarism and confusion. As you follow the pages of the keen-eyed, cool-headed Gibbon, you may well think that the genius of the great historian has been wasted over the mean squabbles, the bald self-seeking, the ignoble superstition, the pomp and the cruelty of the kings and scoundrels who are the chief persons named in the story; yet also you cannot fail to know, when you come to think of it, that the

story has not been fully told; nay scarce told at all, only a chance hint given, here and there. The palace and the camp were but a small part of their world surely; and outside them you may be sure that faith and heroism and love were at work, or what birth could there have been from those days? For the visible tokens of that birth you must seek in the art that grew up and flourished amid that barbarism and confusion, and you know who wrought it. The tyrants, and pedants, and bullies of the time paid dog's wages for it, and bribed their gods with it, but they were too busy over other things to make it; the nameless people wrought it; for no names of its makers are left, not one. Their work only is left, and all that came of it, and all that is to come of it. What came of it first was the complete freedom of art in the midst of a society that had at least begun to free itself from religious and political fetters. Art was no longer now, as in Egypt of olden time, kept rigidly within certain prescribed bounds that no fancy might play with, no imagination overpass, lest the majesty of the beautiful symbols might be clouded and the memory of the awful mysteries they symbolized become dim in the hearts of men. Nor was it any longer as in the Greece of Pericles, wherein no thought might be expressed that could not be expressed in perfect form. Art was free. Whatever a man thought of, that he might bring to light by the labour of his hands, to be praised and wondered at by his fellows. Whatever man had thought in him of any kind, and skill in him of any kind to express it, he was deemed good enough to be used for his own pleasure and the pleasure of his fellows; in this art nothing and nobody was wasted; all people east of the Atlantic felt this art; from Bokhara to Galway, from Iceland to Madras, all the world glittered with its brightness and quivered with its vigour. It cast down the partitions of race and religion also. Christian and Mussulman were made joyful by it; Kelt, Teuton, and Latin raised it up together; Persian, Tartar, and Arab gave and took its gifts from one another. Considering how old the world is it was not too long-lived at its

best. In the days when Norwegian, Dane, and Icelander stalked through the streets of Micklegarth, and hedged with their axes the throne of Kirialax the Greek king, it was alive and vigorous. When blind Dandolo was led from the Venetian galleys on to the conquered wall of Constantinople, it was near to its best and purest days. When Constantine Palæologus came back an old and care-worn man from a peacefuller home in the Morea to his doom in the great city, and the last Cæsar got the muddle of his life solved, not ingloriously, by Turkish swords on the breached and battered walls of that same Constantinople, there were signs of sickness beginning to show in the art that sprang from there to cover east and west alike with its glory.

Art and the Beauty of the Earth

And all that time it was the art of free men. Whatever slavery still existed in the world (more than enough, as always) art had no share in it; and still it was only here and there that any great names rose above the host of those that wrought it. These names (and it was mainly in Italy only) came to the front when those branches of it that were the work of collective rather than individual genius, architecture especially, had quite reached their highest perfection. Men began to look round for something more startlingly new than the slow, gradual change of architecture and the attendant lesser arts could give them. This change they found in the glorious work of the painters, and they received it with an out-spoken excitement and joy that seems strange indeed to us in these days when art is held so cheap.

All went better than well for a time; though in Italy architecture began to lose something of the perfection it had gained, yet it was scarcely to be noticed amidst the glory of the light that was increasing in painting and sculpture. In France and England meantime the change, as it was slower in growing to a head, so it had begun earlier, as witness the sculpture in the great French Churches, and the exquisite drawing of the illuminations of English books; while the Flemings, never very great in the art of building, towards the end of this period had found their true vocation as

painters of a sweet and serious external naturalism, illuminated by colour unsurpassed for purity and brightness.

So had the art of the middle ages climbed gradually to the top of the hill, doubtless not without carrying the seeds of the disease that was to end it, threatenings of great change which no doubt no one heeded at the time. Nor was there much to wonder at in their blindness. since still for centuries to come their art was full of life and splendour, and when at last its death drew near, men could see in it nothing but the hope of a new life. For many years, a hundred years at least, before the change really showed itself, the expression of the greater thoughts that art can deal with was being made more difficult to men not specially learned. Without demanding the absolute perfection that was the rule in the days of Greece, people began to look for an intricacy of treatment that the Greeks had never dreamed of; men began to see hopes of realizing scenes of history and poetry in a far more complete way than the best of their forerunners had attempted. Yet for long the severance between artist and artisan (as our nicknames go) was not obvious, though doubtless things were leading up to it; it is, perhaps, noticeable chiefly in the difference between the work of nation and nation rather than among the individual workmen. I mean, for instance, that in the thirteenth century England was going step by step with Italy as far as mere excellence is concerned, while in the middle of the fifteenth England was rude, and Italy cultured; and even while the change was preparing, by one accident or another came a great access of discoveries of the art and literature of the ancient world, and, as it were, fate ran to meet the half-expressed longings of men.

Then, indeed, all hesitation was over, and suddenly, as it now seems to us, amidst a blaze of glory, the hoped-for new birth took place. Once, as I have said, the makers of beautiful things passed away nameless; but under the Renaissance there are more names of excellent craftsmen left to us than a good memory can well remember, and among those names are the greatest the world has ever known, or perhaps ever

will know. No wonder men's exultation rose high; no wonder that their pride blinded them and that they did not know where they were; yet most pitiable and sad the story is. It was one of those strange times when men seem to themselves to have pierced through all the space which lies between longing and attainment. They, it seems, and no others, have at last reached the spot where lie heaped together all the treasures of the world, vainly sought aforetime. They, it seems, have everything, and no one of those that went before them had anything, nay, not even their fathers whose bones lie yet unrotted under the turf. Art and the Beauty of the Earth

The men of the Renaissance looked at the thousand years behind them as a deedless blank, and at all that lay before them as a perpetual triumphal march. We, taught so much by other people's failures, can see their position otherwise than that. We can see that while up to that time, since art first began, it had always looked forward, now it was looking backward; that whereas once men were taught to look through the art at that which the art represented, they were now taught to deem the art an end in itself, and that it mattered nothing whether the story it told was believed or not. Once its aim was to see, now its aim was to be seen only. Once it was done to be understood, and to be helpful to all men: now the vulgar were beyond the pale, and the insults which the Greek slave-holders and the Roman tax-sweaters of old cast upon the people, upon all men but a chosen few, were brought forth and tricked up again in fantastic guise to adorn the day of boundless hope.

Not all this, indeed, came at once, but come it did, nor very slowly either, when men once began to look back. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the new birth was in its hey-day. Before the seventeenth had quite begun, what had become of its over-weening hopes? In Venice alone of all Italy was any art being done that was of any worth. The conquered North had gained nothing from Italy save an imitation of its worst extravagance, and all that saved the art of England from nothingness was a tradition of the

earlier days still lingering among a people rustic and narrow-minded indeed, but serious, truthful, and of simple habits.

I have just spoken somewhat of how this came about. But what was at the bottom of it, and what I wish you chiefly to note and remember is this, that the men of the Renaissance lent all their energies, consciously or unconsciously, to the severance of art from the daily lives of men, and that they brought it to pass, if not utterly in their own days, yet speedily and certainly. I must remind you, though I, and better men than I, have said it over and over again, that once every man that made anything made it a work of art besides a useful piece of goods, whereas now, only a very few things have even the most distant claim to be considered works of art. I beg you to consider that most carefully and seriously, and to try to think what it means.

But first, lest any of you doubt it, let me ask you what forms the great mass of the objects that fill our museums, setting aside positive pictures and sculpture? Is it not just the common household goods of past time? True it is that some people may look upon them simply as curiosities, but you and I have been taught most properly to look upon them as priceless treasures that can teach us all sorts of things, and yet, I repeat, they are for the most part common household goods, wrought by "common fellows," as people say now, without any cultivation, men who thought the sun went round the earth, and that Jerusalem was exactly in the middle of the world.

Again, take another museum that we have still left us, our country churches. Take note of them, I say, to see how art ran through every thing; for you must not let the name of "church" mislead you: in times of real art people built their churches in just the same style as their houses; "ecclesiastical art" is an invention of the last thirty years. Well, I myself am just fresh from an out-of-the-way part of the country near the end of the navigable Thames, where, within a radius of five miles, are some half-dozen tiny village churches, every one of which is a beautiful work of art, with

its own individuality. These are the works of the Thames-side country bumpkins, as you would call us, nothing grander than that. If the same sort of people were to design and build them now (since within the last fifty years or so they have lost all the old traditions of building, though they clung to them longer than most people), they could not build anything better than the ordinary little plain Nonconformist chapels that one sees scattered about new neighbourhoods. That is what they correspond with, not an architect-designed new Gothic church. The more you study archæology the more certain you will become that I am right in this, and that what we have left us of earlier art was made by the unhelped people. Neither will you fail to see that it was made intelligently and with pleasure. Art and the Beauty of the Earth

That last word brings me to a point so important that at the risk of getting wearisome I must add it to my old sentence and repeat the whole. Time was when everybody that made anything made a work of art besides a useful piece of goods, *and it gave them pleasure to make it.* That is an assertion from which nothing can drive me; whatever I doubt, I have no doubt of that. And, sirs, if there is anything in the business of my life worth doing, if I have any worthy aspiration, it is the hope that I may help to bring about the day when we shall be able to say, So it was once, so it is now.

Do not misunderstand me; I am not a mere praiser of past times. I know that in those days of which I speak life was often rough & evil enough, beset by violence, superstition, ignorance, slavery; yet I cannot help thinking that sorely as poor folks needed a solace, they did not altogether lack one, and that solace was pleasure in their work. Ah, sirs, much as the world has won since then, I do not think it has won for all men such perfect happiness that we can afford to cast aside any solace that Nature holds forth to us. Or must we for ever be casting out one devil by another? Shall we never make a push to get rid of the whole pack of them at once?

I do not mean to say that all the work we do now is done

without any pleasure, but I mean to say that the pleasure is rather that of conquering a good spell of work—a courageous and good feeling certainly—or of bearing up well under the burden, and seldom, very seldom, comes to the pitch of compelling the workman, out of the fulness of his heart, to impress on the work itself the tokens of his manly pleasure.

Nor will our system of organizing the work allow of it. In almost all cases there is no sympathy between the designer and the man who carries out the design; not unseldom the designer also is driven to work in a mechanical, down-hearted kind of way, and I don't wonder at it. I know by experience that the making of design after design—mere diagrams, mind you—without oneself executing them, is a great strain upon the mind. It is necessary, unless all workmen of all grades are to be permanently degraded into machines, that the hand should rest the mind as well as the mind the hand. And I say that this is the kind of work which the world has lost, supplying its place with the work which is the result of the division of labour.

That work, whatever else it can do, cannot produce art, which must, as long as the present system lasts, be entirely confined to such works as are the work from beginning to end of one man: pictures, independent sculpture, and the like. As to these, on the one hand, they cannot fill the gap which the loss of popular art has made, nor can they, especially the more imaginative of them, receive the sympathy which should be their due. I must speak plainly and say that as things go it is impossible for anyone who is not highly educated to understand the higher kind of pictures. Nay, I believe most people receive very little impression indeed from any pictures but those which represent the scenes with which they are thoroughly familiar. The aspect of this as regards people in general is to my mind much more important than that which has to do with the unlucky artist; but he also has some claim upon our consideration; and I am sure that this lack of the general sympathy of simple people weighs very heavily on him, and makes his work feverish and dreamy, or crabbed and perverse.

No, be sure if the people is sick its leaders also have need of healing. Art will not grow and flourish, nay, it will not long exist, unless it be shared by all people; and for my part I don't wish that it should. Art and the Beauty of the Earth

Therefore it is that I stand before you to say that the world has in these days to choose whether she will have art or leave it, and that we also, each one of us, have to make up our minds which camp we will or can join, those that honestly accept art or those that honestly reject it.

Once more let me try to put into words what these two alternatives mean. If you accept it, it must be part of your daily lives, and the daily life of every man. It will be with us wherever we go, in the ancient city full of traditions of past time, in the newly-cleared farm in America or the colonies, where no man has dwelt for traditions to gather round him; in the quiet countryside as in the busy town, no place shall be without it. You will have it with you in your sorrow as in your joy, in your work-a-day hours as in your leisure. It shall be no respecter of persons, but be shared by gentle and simple, learned and unlearned, and be as a language that all can understand. It will not hinder any work that is necessary to the life of man at the best, but it will destroy all degrading toil, all enervating luxury, all foppish frivolity. It will be the deadly foe of ignorance, dishonesty, and tyranny, and will foster good-will, fair dealing, and confidence between man and man. It will teach you to respect the highest intellect with a manly reverence, but not to despise any man who does not pretend to be what he is not; and that which will be the instrument that it shall work with and the food that shall nourish it shall be man's pleasure in his daily labour, the kindest and best gift that the world has ever had.

Again I say, I am sure that this is what art means, no less; that if we attempt to keep art alive on other terms, we are but bolstering up a sham, and that it would be far better for us to accept the other alternative, the frank rejection of art, as many people, and they not the worst of us, have already done. To these and not to me you must go if you want to have any clear idea of what is hoped for the future of the

world when art is laid within her tomb. Yet I think I can in a measure judge from the present tendency of matters what is likely to happen to those things which we handicraftsmen have to deal with.

When men have given up the idea that the work of men's hands can ever be pleasurable to them, they must, as good men and true, do their utmost to reduce the work of the world to a minimum; like us artists they must do all they can to simplify the life of man, to reduce his wants as much as possible; and doubtless in theory they will be able to reduce them more than we shall, for it is clear that the waste of tissue caused by a search after beauty will be forbidden: all ornament will cease from the work of men's hands, though still, wherever Nature works there will be beauty. The garment shall be unadorned, though the moth that frets it is painted with silver and pearl. London shall be a desert of hideousness, though the blossom of the "London pride" be more daintily flecked than the minutest missal that ever monk painted. And when all is done there will yet be too much work, that is to say, too much *pain* in the world.

What then? Machines then. Truly we shall have a good stock to start with, but not near enough. Some men must press on to martyrdom, and toil to invent new ones, till at last pretty nearly everything that is necessary to men will be made by machines. I don't see why it should not be done. I myself have boundless faith in their capacity. I believe machines can do everything—except make works of art.

And yet again, what next? Supposing we shall be able to get martyrs enough (or say slaves) to make all the machines that will still be needed, and to work them, shall we still be able to get rid of all labour, of all that which we have found out is an unmitigated curse? And what will our consciences be like (since I started by supposing us all to be conscientious people), when we think we have done all that we can do, and must still be waited upon by groaning, discontented wretches? What shall we do, I say?

Well, I must say that my imagination will stretch no further than to suggest rebellion in general as a remedy, the end

of which rebellion, if successful, must needs be to set up some form of art again as a necessary solace of mankind.

But to say the truth, this leads me to making another suggestion, a practical one I consider it. Suppose we start by rebelling at once; because when I spoke of the world having to choose between accepting and rejecting art, I did not suppose that its choice could be final if it chose to reject it. No, the rebellion will have to come and will be victorious, don't doubt that; only if we wait till the tyranny is firmly established, our rebellion will have to be a Nihilistic one; every help would be gone save deadly anger and the hope that comes of despair; whereas if we begin now, the change and the counter-change will work together, and the new art will come upon us gradually, and we shall one day see it marching on steadily and victoriously, though its battle has raised no clamour—we, or our sons, or our sons' sons.

How shall our rebellion begin then? What is the remedy for the lack of due pleasure in their work which has befallen all craftsmen, and for the consequent sickness of art and degradation of civilization?

I am afraid whatever answer I may make to that question will disappoint you. I myself suffer so sorely from the lack above-mentioned that I have little remedy in myself save that of fostering discontent. I have no infallible nostrum to cure an evil whose growth is centuries old. Any remedies I can think of are commonplace enough. In those old days of popular art, the world, in spite of all the ills that beset life, was struggling toward civilization and liberty, and it is in that way which we must also struggle, unless you think that we are civilized enough already, as I must confess I do not. Education on all sides is what we must look to. We may expect, if we do not learn much, to learn this at least, that we know but little, and that knowledge means aspiration or discontent, call it which you will.

I do not doubt that, as far as our schools of art go, education is bringing us to that point. I do not think any reasonable man can consider them a failure when the condition of the ornamental part of the individual arts is considered at

the time of their foundation. True it is that those who established them were partly influenced by a delusive expectation that they would presently be able to supply directly a demand which was felt for trained and skilful designers of goods; but, though this hope failed them, they have no doubt influenced both that side of art and others also; among all that they have done not the least is that public recognition of the value of art in general which their very existence implies: or, to speak more correctly, their existence and the interest that is felt in them, is a token of people's uneasiness at the present disorganized state of the arts.

Perhaps you who study here, and represent such a large body of people who must needs have some aspirations towards the progress of the arts, will excuse a word or two from me a little less general than the rest I have been saying. I think I have a right to look upon you as enrolled soldiers of that rebellion against blank ugliness that I have been preaching this evening. You, therefore, above all people are bound to be careful not to give cause to the enemy to blaspheme. You are bound to be specially careful to do solid, genuine work, and eschew all pretence and flashiness.

Be careful to eschew all vagueness. It is better to be caught out in going wrong when you have had a definite purpose, than to shuffle and slur so that people can't blame you because they don't know what you are at. Hold fast to distinct form in art. Don't think too much of style, but set yourself to get out of you what you think beautiful, and express it, as cautiously as you please, but, I repeat, quite distinctly and without vagueness. Always think your design out in your head before you begin to get it on the paper. Don't begin by slobbering and messing about in the hope that something may come out of it. You must see it before you can draw it, whether the design be of your own invention or Nature's. Remember always, form before colour, and outline, silhouette, before modelling; not because these latter are of less importance, but because they can't be right if the first are wrong.

Now, upon all these points you may be as severe with yourselves as you will, and are not likely to be too severe.

Furthermore, those of you especially who are designing for goods, try to get the most out of your material, but always in such a way as honours it most. Not only should it be obvious what your material is, but something should be done with it which is specially natural to it, something that could not be done with any other. This is the very *raison d'être* of decorative art: to make stone look like ironwork, or wood like silk, or pottery like stone is the last resource of the decrepitude of art. Set yourselves as much as possible against all machine-work (this to all men). But if you have to design for machine-work, at least let your design show clearly what it is. Make it mechanical with a vengeance, at the same time as simple as possible. Don't try, for instance, to make a printed plate look like a hand-painted one: make it something which no one would try to do if he were painting by hand, if your market drives you into printed plates: I don't see the use of them myself. To sum up, don't let yourselves be made machines, or it is all up with you as artists. Though I don't much love the iron and brass machines, the flesh and blood ones are more terrible and hopeless to me; no man is so clumsy or base a workman that he is not fit for something better than that.

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Well, I have said that education is the first remedy for the barbarism which has been bred by the hurry of civilization and competitive commerce. To know that men lived and worked mightily before you is an incentive for you to work faithfully now, that you may leave something to those who come after you.

What next is to be thought of after education? I must here admit that if you accept art and join the ranks of those who are to rise in rebellion against the Philistines, you will have a roughish time of it. "Nothing for nothing and not much for a dollar," says a Yankee somewhere, and I am sorry to say it is the rule of nature also. Those of us who have money will have to give of it to the cause, and all of us will have to give time, and thought, and trouble to it; and I must now consider a matter of the utmost importance to art and to the lives of all of us, which we can, if we please, deal with at once,

but which emphatically claims of us time, thought, and money. Of all the things that is likely to give us back popular art in England, the cleaning of England is the first and the most necessary. Those who are to make beautiful things must live in a beautiful place. Some people may be inclined to say, and I have heard the argument put forward, that the very opposition between the serenity and purity of art and the turmoil and squalor of a great modern city stimulates the invention of artists, and produces special life in the art of to-day. I cannot believe it. It seems to me that at the best it but stimulates the feverish and dreamy qualities that throw some artists out of the general sympathy. But apart from that, these are men who are stuffed with memories of more romantic days and pleasanter lands, and it is on these memories they live, to my mind not altogether happily for their art; and you see it is only a very few men who could have even these doubtful advantages.

I abide by my statement that those who are to make beautiful things must live in beautiful places, but you must understand I do not mean to claim for all craftsmen a share of those gardens of the world, or of those sublime and awe-inspiring mountains and wastes that men make pilgrimages to see; that is to say, not a personal share. Most of us must be content with the tales of the poets and painters about these places, and learn to love the narrow spot that surrounds our daily life for what of beauty and sympathy there is in it.

For surely there is no square mile of earth's inhabitable surface that is not beautiful in its own way, if we men will only abstain from wilfully destroying that beauty; and it is this reasonable share in the beauty of the earth that I claim as the right of every man who will earn it by due labour; a decent house with decent surroundings for every honest and industrious family; that is the claim which I make of you in the name of art. Is it such an exorbitant claim to make of civilization? of a civilization that is too apt to boast in after-dinner speeches; too apt to thrust her blessings on far-off peoples at the cannon's mouth before she has improved the

quality of those blessings so far that they are worth having at any price, even the smallest.

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Well, I am afraid that claim is exorbitant. Both you as representatives of the manufacturing districts, and I as representing the metropolis, seem hitherto to have assumed that, at any rate; nor is there one family in a thousand that has established its claim to the right aforesaid. It is a pity though; for if the claim is to be considered inadmissible, then is it most certain that we have been simply filling windbags and weaving sand-ropes by all the trouble we have taken in founding schools of art, National Galleries, South Kensington Museums, and all the rest of it.

I have said education is good, is necessary, to all people; neither can you if you would withhold it; and yet to educate people with no hope, what do you expect to come of that? Perhaps you might learn what to expect in Russia.

Look you, as I sit at my work at home, which is at Hammersmith, close to the river, I often hear go past the window some of that ruffianism of which a good deal has been said in the papers of late, and has been said before at recurring periods. As I hear the yells and shrieks and all the degradation cast on the glorious tongue of Shakespeare and Milton, as I see the brutal reckless faces and figures go past me, it rouses the recklessness and brutality in me also, and fierce wrath takes possession of me, till I remember, as I hope I mostly do, that it was my good luck only of being born respectable and rich that has put me on this side of the window among delightful books and lovely works of art, and not on the other side, in the empty street, the drink-steeped liquor-shops, the foul and degraded lodgings. What words can say what all that means? Do not think, I beg of you, that I am speaking rhetorically in saying that when I think of all this, I feel that the one great thing I desire is that this great country should shake off from her all foreign and colonial entanglements, and turn that mighty force of her respectable people, the greatest power the world has ever seen, to giving the children of these poor folk the pleasures and the hopes of

men. Is that really impossible? is there no hope of it? If so, I can only say that civilization is a delusion and a lie; there is no such thing and no hope of such a thing.

But since I wish to live, and even to be happy, I cannot believe it impossible. I know by my own feelings and desires what these men want, what would have saved them from this lowest depth of savagery: employment which would foster their self-respect and win the praise and sympathy of their fellows, and dwellings which they could come to with pleasure, surroundings which would soothe and elevate them; reasonable labour, reasonable rest. There is only one thing that can give them this, and that is art.

I have no doubt that you think this statement a ridiculous exaggeration, but it is my firm conviction nevertheless, and I can only ask you to remember that in my mind it means the properly organized labour of all men who make anything; that must at least be a mighty instrument in the raising of men's self-respect, in the adding of dignity to their lives. Once more, "Nothing for nothing and very little for a dollar." You can no more have art without paying for it than you can have anything else, and if you care about art, as you must when you come to know it, you will not shrink from the necessary sacrifice. After all, we are the descendants and countrymen of those who have well known how to give the lesser for the greater. What you have to sacrifice is chiefly money, that is, force, and dirt; a serious sacrifice I know; but perhaps, as I have said, we have made greater in England aforetime; nay, I am far from sure that dirt will not in the long run cost us more in hard cash even than art will.

So which shall we have, art or dirt?

What is to be done, then, if we make the better choice? The land we live in is not very big either in actual acreage or in scale of fashion, but I think it is not our natural love for it only that makes us think it as fit as any land for the peaceful dwellings of serious men. Our fathers have shown us that, if it could otherwise be doubted. I say, without fear of contradiction, that no dwelling of men has ever been sweeter or pleasanter than an ancient English house; but our fathers

treated our lovely land well, and we have treated it ill. Time was when it was beautiful from end to end, and now you have to pick your way carefully to avoid coming across blotches of hideousness which are a disgrace, I will not say to civilization, but to human nature. I have seen no statistics of the size of these blotches in relation to the unspoiled, or partially spoiled, country, but in some places they run together so as to cover a whole county, or even several counties, while they increase at a fearful rate, fearful in good earnest and literally. Now, while this goes on unchecked, nay, unlamented, it is really idle to talk about art. While we are doing this or letting it be done, we are really covertly rejecting art, and it would be honester and better for us if we did so openly. If we accept art we must atone for what we have done and pay the cost of it. We must turn this land from the grimy back-yard of a workshop into a garden. If that seems difficult, or rather impossible, to some of you, I cannot help it; I only know that it is necessary.

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As to its being impossible, I do not believe it. The men of this generation even have accomplished matters that but a very little while ago would have been thought impossible. They conquered their difficulties because their faces were set in that direction; and what was done once can be done again. Why even the money and the science that we expend in devices for killing and maiming our enemies present and future would make a good nest-egg towards the promotion of decency of life if we could make up our minds to that tremendous sacrifice.

However, I am far from saying that mere money can do much or indeed anything: it is our will that must do it. Nor need I attempt to try to show how that will should express itself in action. True I have, in common with some others, ideas as to what steps would best help us on our way, but those ideas would not be accepted by you, and I feel sure that when you are thoroughly intent on the goal you will find the means to reach it, and it is of infinitesimal importance what those means may be. When you have accepted the maxim that the external aspect of the country belongs to the whole

public, and that whoever wilfully injures that property is a public enemy, the cause will be on its way to victory.

Meantime it is encouraging to me to think there is one thing that makes it possible for me to stand here, in a district that makes as much smoke as pottery, and to say what I have been saying on the subject of dirt, and that is that quite lately there has been visible expression given to a feeling on this subject, which has doubtless been long growing. If I am a crazy dreamer, as may well be, yet there are many members and supporters of such societies as the Kyrle and the Commons Preservation Societies, who have not time to dream, and whose craziness, if that befel them, would be speedily felt throughout the country.

I pray your pardon for having tried your patience so long. A very few words more, and I have done. Those words are words of hope. Indeed, if I have said anything that seemed to you hopeless, it has been, I think, owing to that bitterness which will sometimes overtake an impatient man when he feels how little his own hands can do towards helping the cause that he has at heart. I know that cause will conquer in the end, for it is an article of faith with me, that the world cannot drop back into savagery, and that art must be its fellow on the forward march. I know well it is not for me to prescribe the road which that progress must take. I know that many things that seem to me to-day clinging hindrances, nay, poisons to that progress, may be furtherers of it, medicines to it, though they be fated to bring terrible things to pass before the visible good comes of them. But that very faith impels me to speak according to my knowledge, feeble as it may be and rash as the words may sound; for every man who has a cause at heart is bound to act as if it depended on him alone, however well he may know his own unworthiness; and thus is action brought to birth from mere opinion. And in all I have been saying I have had steadily in mind that you have asked me to speak to you as a friend, and that I could do no less than be quite open and fearless before my friends and fellow-craftsmen.

SOME HINTS ON PATTERN-DESIGNING. A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE WORKING MEN'S COLLEGE, LONDON, ON DECEMBER 10, 1881.

BY the word pattern-design, of which I have undertaken to speak to you to-night, I mean the ornamentation of a surface by work that is not imitative or historical, at any rate not principally or essentially so. Such work is often not literally flat, for it may be carving or moulded work in plaster or pottery; but whatever material relief it may have is given to it for the sake of beauty and richness, and not for the sake of imitation, or to tell a fact directly; so that people have called this art ornamental art, though indeed all real art is ornamental.

Now, before we go further, we may as well ask ourselves what reason or right this so-called ornamental art has to existence? We might answer the question shortly by saying that it seems clear that mankind has hitherto determined to have it even at the cost of a good deal of labour and trouble: an answer good enough to satisfy our consciences that we are not necessarily wasting our time in meeting here to consider it; but we may furthermore try to get at the reasons that have forced men in the mass always to expect to have what to some of them doubtless seems an absurd superfluity of life.

I do not know a better way of getting at these reasons than for each of us to suppose himself to be in the room in which he will have to pass a good part of his life, the said room being quite bare of ornament, and to be there that he may consider what he can do to make the bare walls pleasant and helpful to him; I say the walls, because, after all, the widest use of pattern-designing is the clothing of the walls of a room, hall, church, or what building you will. Doubtless there will be some, in these days at least, who will say, "'Tis most helpful to me to let the bare walls alone." So also there would be some who, when asked with what

manner of books they will furnish their room, would answer, "With none." But I think you will agree with me in thinking that both these sets of people would be in an unhealthy state of mind, and probably of body also; in which case we need not trouble ourselves about their whims, since it is with healthy and sane people only that art has dealings.

Again, a healthy and sane person being asked with what kind of art he would clothe his walls, might well answer, "With the best art," and so end the question. Yet, out on it! so complex is human life, that even this seemingly most reasonable answer may turn out to be little better than an evasion.

For I suppose the best art to be the pictured representation of men's imaginings; what they have thought has happened to the world before their time, or what they deem they have seen with the eyes of the body or the soul: and the imaginings thus represented are always beautiful indeed, but oftenest stirring to men's passions and aspirations, and not seldom sorrowful or even terrible.

Stories that tell of men's aspirations for more than material life can give them, their struggles for the future welfare of their race, their unselfish love, their unrequited service: things like this are the subjects for the best art; in such subjects there is hope surely, yet the aspect of them is likely to be sorrowful enough: defeat the seed of victory, and death the seed of life, will be shown on the face of most of them.

Take note, too, that in the best art all these solemn and awful things are expressed clearly and without any vagueness, with such life and power that they impress the beholder so deeply that he is brought face to face with the very scenes, and lives among them for a time; so raising his life above the daily tangle of small things that wearies him, to the level of the heroism which they represent.

This is the best art; and who can deny that it is good for us all that it should be at hand to stir our emotions: yet its very greatness makes it a thing to be handled carefully, for

we cannot always be having our emotions deeply stirred: that wearies us body and soul; and man, an animal that longs for rest like other animals, defends himself against the weariness by hardening his heart, and refusing to be moved every hour of the day by tragic emotions; nay, even by beauty that claims his attention over-much.

Such callousness is bad, both for the arts and our own selves; and therefore it is not so good to have the best art for ever under our eyes, though it is abundantly good that we should be able to get at it from time to time.

Meantime, I cannot allow that it is good for any hour of the day to be wholly stripped of life and beauty; therefore we must provide ourselves with lesser (I will not say worse) art with which to surround our common workaday or restful times; and for those times, I think, it will be enough for us to clothe our daily and domestic walls with ornament that reminds us of the outward face of the earth, of the innocent love of animals, or of man passing his days between work and rest as he does. I say, with ornament that reminds us of these things, and sets our minds and memories at work easily creating them; because scientific representation of them would again involve us in the problems of hard fact and the troubles of life, and so once more destroy our rest for us.

If this lesser art will really be enough to content us, it is a good thing; for as to the higher art there never can be very much of it going on, since but few people can be found to do it; also few can find money enough to possess themselves of any portion of it, and, if they could, it would be a piece of preposterous selfishness to shut it up from other people's eyes; while of the secondary art there ought to be abundance for all men, so much that you need but call in the neighbours, and not all the world, to see your pretty new wall when it is finished.

But this kind of art must be suggestive rather than imitative; because, in order to have plenty of it, it must be a kind of work that is not too difficult for ordinary men with

imaginations capable of development; men from whom you cannot expect miracles of skill, and from whose hands you must not ask too much, lest you lose what their intelligence has to give you, by over-wearying them. Withal, the representation of this lower kind of life is pretty sure to become soulless and tiresome unless it have a soul given to it by the efforts of men forced by the limits of order and the necessities of art to think of these things for themselves, and so to give you some part of the infinite variety which abides in the mind of man.

Of course you understand that it is impossible to imitate nature literally; the utmost realism of the most realistic painter falls a long way short of that; and as to the work which must be done by ordinary men not unskilled or dull to beauty, the attempt to attain to realism would be sure to result in obscuring their intelligence, and in starving you of all the beauty which you desire in your hearts, but which you have not learned to express by means of art.

Let us go back to our wall again, and think of it. If you are to put nothing on it but what strives to be a literal imitation of nature, all you can do is to have a few cut flowers or bits of boughs nailed to it, with perhaps a blue-bottle fly or a butterfly here and there. Well, I don't deny that this may make good decoration now and then, but if all decoration had to take that form I think weariness of it would drive you to a white-washed wall; and at the best it is a very limited view to take of nature.

Is it not better to be reminded, however simply, of the close vine-trellis that keeps out the sun by the Nile side; or of the wild-woods and their streams, with the dogs panting beside them; or of the swallows sweeping above the garden boughs toward the house-eaves where their nestlings are, while the sun breaks [through] the clouds on them; or of the many-flowered summer meadows of Picardy? Is not all this better than having to count day after day a few sham-real boughs and flowers, casting sham-real shadows on your walls with little hint of anything beyond Covent Garden in them?

You may be sure that any decoration is futile, and has fallen into at least the first stage of degradation, when it does not remind you of something beyond itself, of something of which it is but a visible symbol.

Now, to sum up, what we want to clothe our walls with is (1) something that it is possible for us to get; (2) something that is beautiful; (3) something which will not drive us either into unrest or into callousness; (4) something which reminds us of life beyond itself, and which has the impress of human imagination strong on it; and (5) something which can be done by a great many people without too much difficulty and with pleasure.

These conditions I believe to have been fulfilled by the pattern-designers in all times when art has been healthy, and to have been all more or less violated when art has been unhealthy and unreal. In such evil times beauty has given place to whim, imagination to extravagance, nature to sick nightmare fancies, and finally workmanlike considerate skill, which refuses to allow either the brain or the hand to be over-taxed, which, without sparing labour when necessary, refuses sternly to waste it, has given place to commercial trickery sustained by laborious botching.

Now, I have been speaking of what may be called the moral qualities of the art we are thinking of; let us try, therefore, to shorten their names, and have one last word on them before we deal with the material or technical part.

Ornamental pattern-work, to be raised above the contempt of reasonable men, must possess three qualities: beauty, imagination, and order.

'Tis clear I need not waste many words on the first of these. You will be drawing water with a sieve with a vengeance if you cannot manage to make ornamental work beautiful.

As for the second quality, imagination: the necessity for that may not be so clear to you, considering the humble nature of our art; yet you will probably admit, when you come to think of it, that every work of man which has

beauty in it must have some meaning in it also; that the presence of any beauty in a piece of handicraft implies that the mind of the man who made it was more or less excited at the time, was lifted somewhat above the commonplace; that he had something to communicate to his fellows which they did not know or feel before, and which they would never have known or felt if he had not been there to force them to it.

I want you to think of this when you see, as, unfortunately, you are only too likely often to see, some lifeless imitation of a piece of bygone art, and are puzzled to know why it does not satisfy you. The reason is that the imitator has not entered into the soul of the dead artist; nay, has supposed that he had but a hand and no soul, and so has not known what he meant to do. I dwell on this, because it forces on us the conclusion that if we cannot have an ornamental art of our own, we cannot have one at all. Every real work of art, even the humblest, is inimitable. I am most sure that all the heaped-up knowledge of modern science, all the energy of modern commerce, all the depth and spirituality of modern thought, cannot reproduce so much as the handiwork of an ignorant, superstitious Berkshire peasant of the fourteenth century; nay, of a wandering Kurdish shepherd, or of a skin-and-bone oppressed Indian ryot. This, I say, I am sure of; and to me the certainty is not depressing, but inspiriting, for it bids us remember that the world has been noteworthy for more than one century and one place, a fact which we are pretty much apt to forget.

Now as to the third of the essential qualities of our art: order. I have to say of it, that without it neither the beauty nor the imagination could be made visible; it is the bond of their life, and as good as creates them, if they are to be of any use to people in general. Let us see, therefore, with what instruments it works, how it brings together the material and spiritual sides of the craft.

I have already said something of the way in which it deals

with the materials which Nature gives it, and how, as it were, it both builds a wall against vagueness and opens a door therein for imagination to come in by. Now, this is done by means of treatment which is called, as one may say technically, the conventionalizing of nature. That is to say, order invents certain beautiful and natural forms, which, appealing to a reasonable and imaginative person, will remind him not only of the part of nature which, to his mind at least, they represent, but also of much that lies beyond that part. I have already hinted at some reasons for this treatment of natural objects. You can't bring a whole country-side, or a whole field, into your room, nor even a whole bush; and, moreover, only a very specially skilled craftsman can make any approach to what might pass with us in moments of excitement for an imitation of such-like things. These are limitations which are common to every form of the lesser arts; but, besides these, every material in which household goods are fashioned imposes certain special limitations within which the craftsman must work. Here again, is the wall of order against vagueness, and the door of order for imagination. For you must understand from the first that these limitations are as far as possible from being hindrances to beauty in the several crafts. On the contrary, they are incitements and helps to its attainment; those who find them irksome are not born craftsmen, and the periods of art that try to get rid of them are declining periods.

Some Hints on Pattern-Designing

Now this must be clear to you, if you come to think of it. Give an artist a piece of paper, and say to him, "I want a design," and he must ask you, "What for? What's to be done with it?" And if you can't tell him, well, I dare not venture to mention the name which his irritation will give you. But if you say, I want this queer space filled with ornament, I want you to make such and such a pretty thing out of these intractable materials, straightway his invention will be quickened, and he will set to work with a will; for, indeed, delight in skill lies at the root of all art.

Now, further, this working in materials, which is the

raison d'être of all pattern-work, still further limits it in the direct imitation of nature, drives it still more decidedly to appeal to the imagination. For example: you have a heap of little coloured cubes of glass to make your picture of, or you have some coloured thrums of worsted wherewith to build up at once a picture and a piece of cloth; well, there is a wrong and a right way of setting to work about this: if you please you may set to work with your cubes and your thrums to imitate a brush-painted picture, a work of art done in a material wherein the limitations are as few and pliable as they are many and rigid in the one you are working in; with almost invisible squares or shuttle-strokes, you may build up, square by square, or line by line, an imitation of an oil-painter's rapid stroke of the brush, and so at last produce your imitation, which doubtless people will wonder at, and say, "How was it done? we can see neither cubes nor thrums in it." And so also would they have wondered if you had made a portrait of the Lord Mayor in burnt sugar, or of Mr. Parnell in fireworks. But the wonder being over, 'tis like that some reasonable person will say, "This is not specially beautiful; and as to its skill, after all, you have taken a year to do what a second-rate painter could have done in three days. Why have you done it at all?" An unanswerable question, I fear.

Well, such materials may be used thus, so clever are men; nay, they have been used thus, so perverse and dull are men!

On the other hand, if you will, you may thoroughly consider your glass cubes or your worsted thrums, and think what can best be done with them; but they need not fetter your imagination, for you may, with them, tell a story in a new way, even if it be not a new story; you may conquer the obstinacy of your material and make it obey you as far as the needs of beauty go, and the telling of your tale; you will be pleased with the victory of your skill, but you will not have forgotten your subject amidst mere laboriousness, and you will know that your victory has been no

barren one, but has produced a beautiful thing, which nothing but your struggle with difficulties could have brought forth, and when people look at it they will be forced to say: "Well, though it is rough, yet, in spite of the material, the workman has shown that he knows what a good line is; it is beautiful, certainly, after its fashion, and the workman has looked at things with his own eyes: and then how the tesseræ gleam in this indestructible picture, how the gold glitters!" Or, "What wealth of colour and softness of gradation there is in these interwoven thrums of worsted, that have drunk the dye so deeply! No other material conceivable could have done it just like this. And the wages are not so high; we can have plenty of this sort of work. Yes, the man is worth his keep."

In this way, also, your materials can be used, so simple and trustful may men be that they may venture to make a work of art thus: nay, so helpful and joyous have they been, that they have so ventured, for the pleasure of many people, their own not least of all.

Now, I have tried to point out to you that the nature of the craft of pattern-designing imposes certain limitations within which it has to work, and also that each branch of it has further limitations of its own. Before saying a few words that relate to these special limitations, I will, by your leave, narrow our subject by dwelling a little on what is one of the most important parts of pattern-designing: the making of a recurring pattern for a flat surface. Let us first look a little on the construction of these, at the lines on which they are built. Now, the beauty and imagination which I have spoken of as necessary to all patterns may be, and often have been, of the very simplest kind, and their order the most obvious. So, to begin with, let us take one of these: our wall may be ornamented with mere horizontal stripes of colour; what beauty there may be in these will be limited to the beauty of very simple proportion, and in the tints and contrast of tints used, while the meaning of them will

be confined to the calling people's attention to the charm of material, and due orderly construction of a wall.*

After this simplest form comes that of chequers and squares of unfoliated diaper, so to call it, which still is but a hint at the possible construction of the wall, when it is not in itself constructional. From that we get to diapers made by lines, either rectilinear or taking the form of circles touching one another. We have now left the idea of constructional blocks or curves, and are probably suggesting scoring of lines on the surface of the wall joined to inlaying, perhaps; or else there is an idea in it of some sort of hanging; at first, as in much of the ancient Egyptian work, woven of reeds or grass, but later on suggesting weaving of finer materials that do not call attention to the crossing of warp and weft.

This next becomes a floriated diaper. The lines are formed by shapes of stems, and leaves or flowers fill the spaces between the lines. This kind of ornamentation has got a long way from the original stripes and squares, and even from the cross-barred matting diapers. The first of these (when used quite simply) is commonly external work, and is used to enrich further what sunlight and shadow already enrich. The second either implies an early stage of civilization, or a persistent memory of its rudeness.

But as to this more elaborate diaper, simple as its construction is, it has never been superseded: in its richer forms it is intimately connected with the stately and vast shapes of Roman architecture; and until the great change took place, when the once-despised East began to mingle with the old decaying Western civilization, and even to dominate it, it was really the only form taken by recurring patterns, except mere chequer and scalework, though certain complications of the circle and the square were used to gain greater richness.

* The following notes on the construction of designs were illustrated by a series of diagrams and by drawings of historic patterns on a greatly enlarged scale.—Ed.

Now the next change, so far as mere construction goes, takes us into what is practically the last stage that recurring patterns can get to, and the change is greater than at first sight it may seem to you: it is part of that change in the master-art from late and decaying Classical into Byzantine, or, as I would rather call it, new-born Gothic art. The first places where it is seen are a few buildings of the early part of the sixth century, when architecture seems to have taken a sudden leap, and, in fact, to have passed from death to new birth. As to the construction of patterns the change was simply this: continuous growth of curved lines took the place of mere contiguity, or of the interlacement of straight lines.

All the recurring patterns of the ancient and classical world were, I repeat, founded on the diaper, square or round. All their borders or friezes were formed either by tufts of flowers growing side by side, with their tendrils sometimes touching or interlacing, or by scrolls wherein there was no continuous growth, but only a masking of the repeat by some spreading member of the pattern. But when young Gothic took the place of old Classic, the change was marked in pattern-designing by the universal acceptance of continuous growth as a necessity of borders and friezes; and in square pattern-work, as I should call it, this growth was the general rule in all the more important designs.

Of this square continuous pattern-work there are two principal forms of construction: (1) The branch formed on a diagonal line, and (2) the net framed on variously-proportioned diamonds. These main constructions were, as time went on, varied in all sorts of ways, more or less beautiful and ingenious; and they are of course only bounding or leading lines, and are to be filled up in all sorts of ways. Nay, sometimes these leading lines are not drawn, and we have left us a sort of powdering in the devices which fill up the spaces between the imaginary lines. Our Sicilian pattern of the thirteenth century gives us an example of this; and this Italian one of the fourteenth century gives us another,

the leading lines of the diagonal branch being broken, and so leaving a powdering on those lines; but in all cases the net or branch lines, that is, the simple diagonal or crossing diagonal, are really there.

For clearness' sake, I will run through the different kinds of construction that I have named: (1) Horizontal stripes; (2) block diaper or chequer; (3) matting diaper, very various in form; (4) square line diaper; (5) floriated square diaper; (6) round diaper formed by contiguous circles; (7) the diagonal branch; (8) the net; (9, which is supplementary) powderings on the lines of the diagonal branch, or of the net.

These are all the elementary forms of construction for a recurring pattern, but of course there may be many varieties of each of them. Elaborate patterns may be wrought on the stripes or chequers; the foliated diaper may be wrought interlocking; the net may be complicated by net within net; the diagonal bough may be crossed variously, or the alternate boughs may be slipped down so as to form a kind of untied and dislocated net; the circles may intersect each other instead of touching, or polygonal figures may be built on them, as in the strange star patterns which are the differentia of Arab art.

Of course, also, these constructional lines may be masked in an infinite number of ways, and in certain periods it was most usual to do this, and much ingenuity was spent, and not a little wasted, in doing it.

Before I pass to the use to which these forms of pattern may be put, I will say a little on the subject of the relief of patterns, which may be considered as the other side of their mechanism. We have, you see, been talking about the skeletons of them, and those skeletons must be clothed with flesh, that is, their members must have tangible superficial area; and by the word relief I understand the method of bringing this out.

Of course this part of the subject is intimately connected

with the colour of designs, but of that I shall only say so much as is necessary for dealing with their relief.

To put the matter as shortly as possible, one may say that there are two ways of relief for a recurring surface-pattern, either that the figure shall show light upon a dark, or dark upon a light ground; or that the whole pattern, member by member, should be outlined by a line of colour which both serves to relieve it from its ground, which is not necessarily either lighter or darker than the figure, and also prevents the colour from being inharmonious or hard.

Now, to speak broadly, the first of these methods of relief is used by those who are chiefly thinking about form, the second by those whose minds are most set on colour; and you will easily see, if you come to think of it, how widely different the two methods are. Those who have been used to the first method of dark upon light, or light upon dark, often get confused and troubled when they have to deal with many colours, and wonder why it is that, in spite of all their attempts at refinement of colour, their designs still look wrong. The fact is, that when you have many colours, when you are making up your design by contrast of hues and variety of shades, you must use the bounding line to some extent, if not through and through.

Of these two methods of relief, you must think of the first as being the relief of one plane from another; in it there is always an idea of at least more than one plane of surface, and often of several planes. The second you must think of as the relief of colour from colour, and designs treated thus both should look, and do look, perfectly flat. Again, to speak broadly, the first method is that of the West, the second that of the East; but of the later and (excuse the "bull") the Gothic East. The idea of plane relieved on plane was always present in all the patterns of the ancient and classical world.

Now, as to the use to be made of these recurring surface patterns, the simpler of them, such as mere stripes and

simple diapers, have been, and doubtless will always be used for external decoration of walls, and also for subsidiary decoration where the scale is large and where historical art plays the chief part. On the other hand, some people may doubt as to what share, if any, the more elaborate forms of pattern-work should have in internal wall decoration. True it is that the principle of the continuous line, which led up to all that elaboration, was an invention of the later East, just as the system of relieving colour from colour was; and I believe the two things are closely connected, and sprang from this cause, that these peoples were for various reasons not much driven towards the higher pictorial art, and did not reach any great excellence in it; therefore they felt a need for developing their pattern-art to the highest degree possible, till it became something more than a little-noticed accompaniment to historical art, which was all that it used to be in the ancient or the classical world.

Perhaps the fact that the barbarians invented what the elder civilization, the great nurse of the higher arts, despised, may seem to some of you a condemnation of this more elaborate pattern-work; but before you make up your minds to that, I would ask you to remember within what narrow limits that perfection of Greece moved. It seems to me that unless you can have the whole of that severe system of theirs, you will not be bettered by taking to a minor part of it; nor, indeed, do I think that you can have that system now, for it was the servant of a perfection which is no longer attainable. The whole art of the classical ancients, while it was alive and growing, was the art of a society made up of a narrow aristocracy of citizens, waited upon by a large body of slaves, and surrounded by a world of barbarism which was always despised and never noticed till it threatened to overwhelm the self-sufficient aristocracy that called itself the civilized world.

No, I think that the barbarians who invented modern Europe invented also several other things which we, their

children, cannot decently disregard, or pass by wrapped up in a cloak of sham classical disguise; and that one of these things, the smallest of them if you will, was this invention of the continuous line that led to elaborate and independent pattern-work; and I believe that this was one of those things which, once invented, cannot be dropped, but must always remain a part of architecture, like the arch—like the pointed arch. Properly subordinated to architecture on the one hand, and to historic art on the other, it ought yet, I think, to play a great part in the making our houses at once beautiful and restful; an end which is one of the chief reasons for existence of all art.

As to its subordination to the greater arts, all we can say about that is that we should not have too much of it. I don't think there is any danger of its thrusting the more intellectual and historic arts out of their due place; rather, perhaps, it is like to be neglected in comparison with them. But if it makes any advance, as it may do, I can see that counsels of despair may sometimes drive us into excess in the use of surface ornament. I mean that our houses are so base and ugly, and it is so hard to alter this bad condition of life, that people may be driven out of all hope of getting good architecture, and try to forget their troubles in that respect by overdoing their internal decoration. Well, you must not suppose that I object to people making the best of their ugly houses; indeed, you probably know that I personally should be finely landed if they did not. Nevertheless, noble building is the first and best and least selfish of the arts, and unless we can manage to get it somehow, we shall soon have no decoration, or, indeed, art of any kind, to put into the dog-hutches which we now think good enough for refined and educated people, to say nothing about other buildings lesser and greater.

Now, with your leave, I will go through some of the chief crafts in which surface patterns (and chiefly recurring ones) are used, and try to note some of the limitations which necessity and reason impose on them, and show how

those limitations may be made helps, and not hindrances, to those crafts.

Let us take first the humble, but, as things go, useful art of paper-staining. And firstly, you must remember that it is a cheap art, somewhat easily done; elaborate patterns are easy in it; so be careful not to overdo either the elaboration in your paper or the amount of pattern-work in your rooms. I mean, by all means have the prettiest paper you can get, but don't fall in love so much with the cheapness of its prettiness as to have several patterns in one room, or even two, if you will be advised by me. Above all, eschew that bastard imitation of picture, embroidery, or tapestry-work, which, under the name of dado-papers, are so common at present; even when they are well designed, as they often are, they are a mistake. They do not in the least fill the place of patterns of beautiful execution or of beautiful materials, and they weary us of these better things by simulating them. The ease with which the brushwork of an artist can be, I will not say imitated, but caricatured, in paperhangings, is a snare to this useful manufacture, and has been so from the first. In the printed wares you may have any amount of fine lines and shading by hatching, but you cannot have any colour which has not a definite outline. By disregarding these facts, you lose whatever of special pleasure is to be obtained from linear shading, and by clear relief of light upon dark or dark upon light, and you affront people's reason by trying to get the subtle gradations which the execution of handwork alone can give.

Now, again, as to paperhangings, one may accept as an axiom that, other things being equal, the more mechanical the process, the less direct should be the imitation of natural forms; on the other hand, in these wares which are stretched out flat on the wall, and have no special beauty of execution about them, we may find ourselves driven to do more than we otherwise should in masking the construction of our patterns. It gives us a chance of showing that we are pattern-designers born by accepting this apparent dilemma cheer-

fully, and setting our wits to work to conquer it. Let me state the difficulty again. In this craft the absence of limitations as to number of colours, and the general ease of the manufacture, is apt to tempt us into a mere twisting of natural forms into lines that may pass for ornamental; to yield to this temptation will almost certainly result in our designing a mere platitude. On the other hand is the temptation to design a pattern as we might do for a piece of woven goods, where the structure is boldly shown, and the members strongly marked; but such a pattern done in a cheap material will be apt to look over-ambitious, and, being stretched out flat on the wall, will lead the eye overmuch to its geometrical lines, and all repose will be lost.

What we have to do to meet this difficulty is to create due paper-stainers' flowers and leaves, forms that are obviously fit for printing with a block; to mask the construction of our pattern enough to prevent people from counting the repeats of our pattern, while we manage to lull their curiosity to trace it out; to be careful to cover our ground equably. If we are successful in these two last things, we shall attain a look of satisfying mystery, which is an essential in all patterned goods, and which in paperhangings must be done by the designer, since, as aforesaid, they fall into no folds, and have no special beauty of material to attract the eye.

Furthermore, we must, if we possibly can, avoid making accidental lines, which are very apt to turn up when a pattern is repeated over a wall. As to such lines, vertical lines are the worst; diagonal ones are pretty bad, and horizontal ones do not so much matter.

As to the colouring of paperhangings, it is much on the same footing as the forms of the design. The material being commonplace and the manufacture mechanical, the colour should above all things be modest; though there are plenty of pigments which might tempt us into making our colour very bright or even very rich, we shall do well to be specially cautious in their use, and not to attempt brightness

unless we are working in a very light key of colour, and if our general tone is bound to be deep, to keep the colour grey. You understand, of course, that no colour should ever be muddy or dingy; to make goods of such sort shows inexperience, and to persist in making them, incapacity. Now, a last word about this craft. Have papers with pretty patterns if you like them, but if you don't, I beg of you, quite seriously, to have nothing to do with them, but whitewash your wall and be done with it. That, I distinctly inform you, is the way, and the only way, that you who do not care about the art can help us manufacturers.

So much for paper-staining. The craft of printing on cloth (generally cotton) we may take next as a kindred art. Yet we don't meet quite the same difficulties here, for it is generally used so that it falls into folds or turns round furniture; so we need not be so anxious about masking the structure of our patterns, or so afraid of accidental lines; and as to the colour, our material is so much more interesting that we may indulge in any brightness we can get out of genuine dyes, which for the rest have always some beauty of their own.

As to the spirit of the designs for this craft, for some reason or other, I imagine because it is so decidedly an Eastern manufacture, it seems to call for specially fantastic forms. A pattern which would make a very good paper-hanging would often look dull and uninteresting as a chintz pattern. The naïvest of flowers with which you may do anything that is not ugly; birds and animals, no less naïve, all made up of spots and stripes and flecks of broken colour, these seem the sort of thing we ask for. You cannot well go wrong so long as you avoid commonplace, and keep somewhat on the daylight side of nightmare. Only you must remember that, considering the price of the material it is done on, this craft is a specially troublesome one; so that in designing for it you must take special care that every fresh process you lay upon a poor filmy piece of cotton, worth fourpence or fivepence per yard, should really add beauty

to it, and not be done for whim's sake. I really think you would be shocked if you knew how much trouble and anxiety can be thrown away on such trifles: what a stupendous weight of energy and the highest science have been brought to bear upon producing a pattern consisting of three black dots and a pink line, done in some special manner on a piece of cotton cloth. I don't quite know what excuse for this trifling a philosopher might find, but to a craftsman like myself it seems mere barbarous twaddle, and I beg of you who wish to avoid complicity with it never to buy a piece of patterned cotton if you don't think the pattern pretty: that's the only way you can help us craftsmen in the matter; that is what I call patronage of art.

Some Hints on Pattern-Designing

Now as to the pattern-designing for figured woven stuffs, which is one of the most important branches of the art. Here, as you will find yourself more limited by special material than in the branches above named, so you will not be so much beset by the dangers of commonplace. You cannot choose but make your flowers weavers' flowers. On the other hand, as the craft is a nobler one than paper-staining or cotton-printing, it claims from us a higher and more dignified style of design. Your forms must be clearer and sharper, your drawing more exquisite, your pattern must have more of meaning and history in it: in a word, your design must be more concentrated than in what we have hitherto been considering; yet again, if you have to risk more, you have some compensation in the fact that you will not be hampered by any necessity for masking the construction of your pattern, both because your stuff is pretty sure to be used falling into folds, and will be wrought in some material that is beautiful in itself, more or less; so that there will be a play of light and shade on it, which will give subordinate incident, and minimize the risk of hardness. Moreover, these last facts about woven stuffs call on you to design in a bolder fashion and on a larger scale than for stiffer and duller-surfaced goods; so we will say that the special qualities needful for a good design for woven stuff

are breadth and boldness, ingenuity and closeness of invention, clear definite detail joined to intricacy of parts, and, finally, a distinct appeal to the imagination by skilful suggestion of delightful pieces of nature.

In saying this about woven stuffs I have been thinking of goods woven by the shuttle in the common looms, which produce recurring patterns; there are, however, two forms of the weaver's craft which are outside these, and on which I will say a few words: first, the art of tapestry-weaving, in which the subjects are so elaborate that, of necessity, it has thrown aside all mechanical aid, and is wrought by the most primitive process of weaving, its loom being a tool rather than a machine. Under these circumstances it would be somewhat of a waste of labour to weave recurring patterns in it, though in less mechanical times it has been done. I have said that you could scarcely bring a whole bush into a room for your wall decoration, but since in this case the mechanical imitations are so few, and the colour obtainable in its materials is so deep, rich, and varied, as to be unattainable by anything else than the hand of a good painter in a finished picture, you really may almost turn your wall into a rose-hedge or a deep forest, for its material and general capabilities almost compel us to fashion plane above plane of rich, crisp, and varying foliage with bright blossoms, or strange birds showing through the intervals. However, such designs as this must be looked upon as a sort of halting-place on the way to historical art, and may be so infinitely varied that we have not time to dwell upon it.

The second of these offshoots of the weaver's craft is the craft of carpet-making: by which I mean the real art, and not the makeshift goods woven purely mechanically. Now this craft, despite its near kinship as to technical matters with tapestry, is very specially a pattern-designer's affair. As to designing for it, I must say it is mighty difficult, because from the nature of it we are bound to make our carpet not only a passable piece of colour, but even an exquisite one, and, at the same time, we must get enough of form

and meaning into it to justify our making it at all in these Western parts of the world; since as to the mere colour we are not likely to beat, and may be well pleased if we equal, an ordinary genuine Eastern specimen.

Once more, the necessary limitations of the art will make us, not mar us, if we have courage and skill to face and overcome them. As for a carpet-design, it seems quite clear that it should be quite flat, that it should give no more at least than the merest hint of one plane behind another; and this, I take it, not so much for the obvious reason that we don't feel comfortable in walking over what simulates high relief, but rather because in a carpet we specially desire quality in material and colour: that is, every little bit of surface must have its own individual beauty of material and colour. Nothing must thrust this necessity out of view in a carpet. Now, if in our coarse, worsted mosaic we make awkward attempts at shading and softening tint into tint, we shall dirty our colour and so degrade our material; our mosaic will look coarse, as it ought never to look; we shall expose our lack of invention, and shall be parties to the making of an expensive piece of goods for no good reason.

Now, the way to get the design flat, and at the same time to make it both refined and effective in colour, in a carpet-design, is to follow the second kind of relief I told you of, and to surround all or most of your figure by a line of another tint, and to remember while you are doing it that it is done for this end, and not to make your design look neat and trim. If this is well done, your pieces of colour will look gemlike and beautiful in themselves, your flowers will be due carpet-flowers, and the effect of the whole will be soft and pleasing. But I admit that you will probably have to go to the school of the Eastern designers to attain excellence in the art, as this in its perfection is a speciality of theirs. Now, after all, I am bound to say that when these difficulties are conquered, I, as a Western man and a picture-lover, must still insist on plenty of meaning in your patterns; I must have unmistakable suggestions of gardens and fields,

and strange trees, boughs, and tendrils, or I can't do with your pattern, but must take the first piece of nonsense-work a Kurdish shepherd has woven from tradition and memory; all the more, as even in that there will be some hint of past history.

Since carpets are always bordered cloths, this will be a good place for saying a little on the subject of borders, which will apply somewhat to other kinds of wares. You may take it that there are two kinds of border: one that is merely a finish to a cloth, to keep it from looking frayed out, as it were, and which doesn't attract much notice. Such a border will not vary much from the colour of the cloth it bounds, and will have in its construction many of the elements of the construction of the filling-pattern; though it must be strongly marked enough to fix that filling in its place, so to say.

The other kind of border is meant to draw the eye to it more or less, and is sometimes of more importance than the filling: so that it will be markedly different in colour, and as to pattern will rather help out that of the filling by opposing its lines than by running with them. Of these borders, the first, I think, is the fitter when you are using a broad border; the second does best for a narrow one.

All borders should be made up of several members, even where they are narrow, or they will look bald and poor, and ruin the whole cloth. This is very important to remember.

The turning the corner of a border is a difficult business, and will try your designing skill rudely; but I advise you to face it, and not to stop your border at the corner by a rosette or what not. As a rule, you should make it run on, whereby you will at least earn the praise of trying to do your best.

As to the relative proportion of filling and border: if your filling be important in subject, and your cloth large, especially if it be long, your border is best to be narrow, but bright and sparkling, harder and sharper than the filling, but smaller in its members; if, on the contrary, the

filling be broken in colour and small in subject, then have a wide border, important in subject, clear and well defined in drawing, but by no means hard in relief.

Some Hints on Pattern-Designing

Remember on this head, once more, that the bigger your cloth is the narrower in comparison should be your border; a wide border has a most curious tendency towards making the whole cloth look small.

So much very briefly about carpet-designing and weaving in general; and, once more, those of you who don't yet know what a pretty pattern is, and who don't care about a pattern, don't be dragooned by custom into having a pattern because it is a pattern, either on your carpets or your curtains, or even your waistcoats. That's the way that you, at present, can help the art of pattern-designing.

I will finish my incomplete catalogue of the crafts that need the pattern-designer by saying a few words on designing for embroidery and for pottery-painting.

As to embroidery-designing, it stands midway between that for tapestry and that for carpets; but as its technical limits are much less narrow than those of the latter craft, it is very apt to lead people into cheap and commonplace naturalism: now, indeed, it is a delightful idea to cover a piece of linen cloth with roses and jonquils and tulips, done quite natural with the needle, and we can't go too far in that direction if we only remember the needs of our material and the nature of our craft in general: these demand that our roses and the like, however unmistakably roses, shall be quaint and naïve to the last degree, and also, since we are using specially beautiful materials, that we shall make the most of them, and not forget that we are gardening with silk and gold-thread; and lastly, that in an art which may be accused by ill-natured persons of being a superfluity of life, we must be specially careful that it shall be beautiful, and not spare labour to make it sedulously elegant of form, and every part of it refined in line and colour.

In pottery-painting we are more than ever in danger of

falling into sham naturalistic platitude, since we have no longer to stamp our designs with a rough wood-block on paper or cotton, nor have we to build up our outlines by laying square by square of colour, but, pencil in hand, may do pretty much what we will. So we must be a law to ourselves, and when we get a tile or a plate to ornament remember two things: first, the confined space or odd shape we have to work in; and second, the way in which the design has to be executed. As to the first point, if we are not to miss our aim altogether, we must do something ingenious and inventive, something that will at once surprise and please people, which will take hold of their eyes as something new, and force them to look at it. Within these limits we may do as we please, so long as we do not forget, in the next place, that our design has to be pencilled by an instrument difficult to use, but delightful to handle when the difficulty is overcome, a long, sharp-pointed brush charged with heavy colour, which pencilling should be done with a firm, deliberate, and decided, but speedy hand.

I feel the more bound to insist on this in pottery-painting because of late a kind of caricature art has been going about in the shape of elaborately painted dishes of the most disastrous design and execution. Most often the designers of these have thought they have done all they need when they have drawn a bunch of flowers or a spray without any attempt at arrangement, and coloured it in imitation of a coarse daub in oils, without the least thought of what pigments were within reach of the pottery-painter. Such things teach nothing but the art of how not to do it.

Now, once more, those of you who are unconscious that there is any beauty in a pattern painted on pottery can at least help the art by utterly refusing to have any pattern on it; and I beg them earnestly and sincerely to take that amount of trouble.

You may think that I have been wandering from my point in saying so much about the various crafts for which designs have to be made, rather than treating of the designs

in general; but I have not done so by accident, at any rate, but because I want you to understand that I think it of capital importance that a pattern-designer should know all about the craft for which he has to draw. Neither will knowledge only suffice him; he must have full sympathy with the craft and love it, or he can never do honour to the special material he is designing for. Without this knowledge and sympathy the cleverest of men will do nothing but provide platitudes for the public and wanton puzzles for those who execute the work to break their hearts over.

Some Hints on Pattern-Designing

Perhaps a few words on pattern-designing generally may be of some use to some of you, though the chances are you will have heard the same thing said often enough before.

Above all things, avoid vagueness; run any risk of failure rather than involve yourselves in a tangle of poor weak lines that people can't make out. Definite form bounded by firm outline is a necessity for all ornament. If you have any inclination towards that shorthand of picture-painters, which they use when they are in a hurry, and which people call sketching, give up pattern-designing, for you have no turn for it. I repeat, do not be afraid of your design or try to muddle it up so that people can scarce see it; if it is arranged on good lines, and its details are beautiful, you need not fear its looking hard so long as it covers the ground well and is not wrong in colour.

Rational growth is necessary to all patterns, or at least the hint of such growth; and in recurring patterns, at least, the noblest are those where one thing grows visibly and necessarily from another. Take heed in this growth that each member of it be strong and crisp, that the lines do not get thready or flabby or too far from their stock to sprout firmly and vigorously; even where a line ends it should look as if it had plenty of capacity for more growth if so it would.

Again, as to dealing with nature. To take a natural spray of what not and torture it into certain lines, is a hopeless way of designing a pattern. In all good pattern-designs the

idea comes first, as in all other designs, e.g., a man says, I will make a pattern which I will mean to give people an idea of a rose-hedge with the sun through it; and he sees it in such and such a way; then, and not till then, he sets to work to draw his flowers, his leaves and thorns, and so forth, and so carries out his idea.

In choosing natural forms be rather shy of certain very obviously decorative ones, e.g., bind-weed, passion-flower, and the poorer forms of ivy, used without the natural copiousness. I should call these trouble-savers, and warn you of them, unless you are going to take an extra amount of trouble over them. We have had them used so cheaply this long while that we are sick of them.

On the other hand, outlandishness is a snare. I have said that it was good and reasonable to ask for obviously natural flowers in embroidery; one might have said the same about all ornamental work, and further, that those natural forms which are at once most familiar and most delightful to us, as well from association as from beauty, are the best for our purpose. The rose, the lily, the tulip, the oak, the vine, and all the herbs and trees that even we cockneys know about, they will serve our turn better than queer, outlandish, upsidedown-looking growths. If we cannot be original with these simple things, we shan't help ourselves out by the uncouth ones.

A very few words as to style. Most true it is that if all art ought to belong specially to its time and nation, this should be, above all, the case with such a comparatively easy art as pattern-designing. Yet I am not so simple as to suppose that we can suddenly build up a style out of the wreck of inanity into which we had fallen a little while ago, without any help from the ages of art. And though I would say loudly, Don't copy any style at all, but make your own; yet you must study the history of your art, or you will be noseled by the first bad copyist of it that you come across. Well, my advice to you in this matter is very simple. Study any or all of the styles that have real growth in them, and as for

the others, don't do more than give a passing glance at them, for they can do you no good. From the days of ancient Egypt to the time of the sickness of mediæval art the architectural arts had life and growth in them: study all that as much as you please; but, from the times of the Renaissance onwards, life, growth, and hope are gone from these, and as matters of study you have nothing to do with them. The architectural art that was in use even at the time of the great masters of the Renaissance will mislead you if you try to found any style of pattern-designing upon it, and this in spite of many splendid qualities in itself. It is not the art of hope, but of decay. As to what followed it, and culminated in the bundle of degraded whims falsely called a style, that so fitly expresses the corruption of the days of Louis XV., you need not even look at that in passing. More noble failures will serve your turn better, even for warnings.

Some Hints on Pattern-Designing

If I am speaking to any pattern-designers here, or to those that have any influence over their lives, I should like to remind them of one thing, that the constant designing of recurring patterns is a very harassing business, and should always be supplemented with some distinctly executive work. Those who in the present unhappy state of the arts do not design for work which they carry out themselves should relieve their brain by drawing from the human figure, from flowers or landscapes or old pictures, or some such things; by doing something which is not a diagram, but is an end in itself, or they will either suffer terribly or become quite stupid. A friend of mine, who is a Manchester calico-printer, told me the other day that the shifty and clever designers who draw the thousand and one ingenious and sometimes pretty patterns for garment-goods which Manchester buys of Paris, have a great tendency to go mad, and often do so; and I cannot wonder at it.

That such a caution as this should be necessary is a woful commentary on the state of those arts on which pattern-designing lives. That the art whose office it was to give rest and pleasure to the toiling hand should now have

become a torment to the wearied brain of man, is a strange inversion of the natural order of things, and, to my mind, points to matters far more serious than would at first sight seem to be wrapped up in the question of designing pretty patterns for our common household goods.

I must ask your patience for a few minutes yet while I say a word or two on these matters, for I have made a compact with myself that I will never address my countrymen on the subject of art without speaking as briefly, but also as plainly as I can, on the degradation of labour which I believe to be the great danger of civilization, as it has certainly proved itself to be the very bane of art.

Foresight and goodwill have set on foot many schemes for educating people before they come to working years: for tending them when misfortune or sickness prevents them from working, for amusing them reasonably when they are at leisure from their work: aims that are all good and some necessary to the well-being of our race.

But can they alone touch the heart of the matter, to be sedulous about what people do with their time till they are growing out of childhood into youth, to take pains to add to the pleasure of their few hours of rest, and at the same time never to give a thought to the way in which they spend their working hours (ten hours a day, and a long time it is to spend in wishing we were come to the end of it) between the ages of thirteen and seventy? This, I say, does seem to me a strange shutting of the eyes to one of the main difficulties of life, a strange turning from the great question which all well-wishers to their neighbours ought to ask: How can men gain hope and pleasure in their daily work?

I do not profess to foretell what will happen to the world if we persist in keeping our eyes shut on this point; but one thing I know will happen: the extinction of all art. I say I know it will happen, and indeed it is happening now, and unless we take the other turn before long it will soon be all done. You would not believe me if I professed to think that a light matter even by itself: the thrusting out of all beauty

from the life of man; but when one knows what lies at the bottom of it, how much heavier it seems, the thrusting out of all pleasure and self-respect from man's daily work, the helplessly letting that daily work become a mere blind instrument for the over-peopling of the world, for the ceaseless multiplication of causeless and miserable lives.

Surely I am speaking to some whose lives, like mine, are blessed with pleasurable and honourable work, who cannot bear the thought that we are to go on shutting our eyes to this, and to do nothing because our time on earth is not long. Can we not face the evil and do our best to amend it our very selves? If it be a necessary evil, let us at least do our share of proving that it is so by withstanding it to the utmost. The worst that can happen to us rebels in that case is to be swept away before the flood of that necessity, which will happen to us no less if we do not struggle against it—if we are flunkies, not rebels. Indeed, you may think that the metaphor is all too true, and that we are but mere straws in that resistless flood. But don't let us strain a metaphor; for we are no straws, but men, with each one of us a will and aspirations, and with duties to fulfil; so let us see after all what we can do to prove whether it be necessary that art should perish: that is, whether men should live in an ugly world, with no work to do in it but wearisome work.

Well, first we must be conscious of the evil, as I believe some are who do not dare to acknowledge it. And next we must dare to acknowledge it, as some do who dare not act further in the matter.

And next: why, a good deal next, though it may be put into few words, for steady rebellion is a heavyish matter to take in hand; and I tell you that every one who loves art in these days and dares pursue it to the uttermost is a dangerous rebel enough; and I will finish by speaking of one or two things that we must do to fit ourselves for our troublous life of rebellion.

We ought to get to understand the value of intelligent work, the work of men's hands guided by their brains, and

to take that, though it be rough, rather than the unintelligent work of machines or slaves, though it be delicate; to refuse altogether to use machine-made work unless where the nature of the thing made compels it, or where the machine does what mere human suffering would otherwise have to do: to have a high standard of excellence in wares and not to accept makeshifts for the real thing, but rather to go without; to have no ornament merely for fashion's sake, but only because we really think it beautiful, otherwise to go without it; not to live in an ugly and squalid place (such as London) for the sake of mere excitement or the like, but only because our duties bind us to it; to treat the natural beauty of the earth as a holy thing not to be rashly dealt with for any consideration; to treat with the utmost care whatever of architecture and the like is left us of the times of art. I deny that it can ever be our own to do as we like with; it is the property of the world, that we hold in trust for those that come after us.

Here is a set of things not easy to do (as it seems), which I believe to be the duty of all men taking some trouble in the art of life, and not giving in to the barbarous and cumbrous luxury, or comfort as you may please to call it, which some of us are so proud of as a mark of our civilization, but which I sometimes think is really fated to stifle all art, and in the long run all intelligence, unless we grow wise in time and look to it.

I dare say that nobody but men who consciously or unconsciously care about art would think of binding themselves by these rules, but perhaps some others may join them in trying to act on these that follow. To have as little as possible to do with middlemen, but to bring together the makers and the buyers of goods as closely as possible. To do our best to further the independence and reasonable leisure of all handicraftsmen. To eschew all bargains, real or imaginary (they are mostly the latter), and to be anxious to pay and to get what a piece of goods is really worth. To that end to try to understand the difference between good and bad in

wares, which will also give us an insight into the craftsman's troubles, and will tend to do away with an ignorant impatience and ill-temper which is much too common in our dealings with them nowadays.

In short, as I have said before that we must strive against barbarous luxury, so here I must say that we must strive against barbarous waste. What we have to do is to try to put co-operation in the place of competition in the dealings of men; that is, in place of commercial war, with all the waste and injustice of war, which, since men are foolish rather than malicious, has to be softened ever and anon by weak compliance and contemptuous good-nature, we must strive to put commercial peace with justice and thrift beside it.

I ask you not to think that I have been wandering from my point in saying all this: I have had to talk to you to-night about popular art, the foundation on which all art stands. I could not go through the dreary task of speaking to you of a phantom of bygone times, of a thing with no life in it; I must speak of a living thing with hope in it, or hold my peace; and most deeply am I convinced that popular art cannot live if labour is to be for ever the thrall of muddle, dishonesty, and disunion. Cheerfully I admit that I see signs about us of a coming time of order, goodwill, and union, and it is that which has given me the courage to say to you these few last words, and to hint to you what in my poor judgment we each and all of us who have the cause at heart may do to further the cause.

THE HISTORY OF PATTERN-DESIGNING. A LECTURE DELIVERED IN SUPPORT OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS, 1882.

TO give anything like a history of the art of pattern-designing would be impossible within the limits of one lecture, for it would be doing no less than attempting to tell the whole story of architectural or popular art, a vast and most important subject. All I can pretend to do at present is to call your attention to certain things I have noticed in studying the development of the art of pattern-designing from ancient times to modern, and to hint at certain principles that have seemed to me to lie at the bottom of the practice of that art, and certain tendencies which its long course has had. Even in doing this I know I shall have to touch on difficult matters and take some facts for granted that may be, and have been, much disputed; and I must, therefore, even treating the subject thus, claim your indulgence for a necessary curtness and incompleteness.

I have just used the word modern; so to clear the ground for what follows, I will say that by modern art I do not mean the art of the Victorian era. I need not speak of the art of our own day, because, on the one hand, whatever there is of it that is worth considering is eclectic, and is not bound by the chain of tradition to anything that has gone before us; and, on the other hand, whatever of art is left which is in any sense the result of continuous tradition is, and long has been, so degraded as to have lost any claim to be considered as art at all. The present century has no school of art but such as each man of talent or genius makes for himself to serve his craving for the expression of his thought while he is alive, and to perish with his death. The two preceding centuries had indeed styles, which dominated the practice of art, and allowed it to spread more or less widely over the civilized world; but those styles were not alive and progressive, in spite of the feeling of self-sufficiency with which they were looked on by the artists of those days.

When the great masters of the Renaissance were gone, they who, stung by the desire of doing something new, turned their mighty hands to the work of destroying the last remains of living popular art, putting in its place for a while the results of their own wonderful individuality: when these great men were dead, and lesser men of the ordinary type were masquerading in their garments, then at last it was seen what the so-called new birth really was; then we could see that it was the fever of the strong man yearning to accomplish something before his death, not the simple hope of the child, who has long years of life and growth before him. Now the art, whose sickness this feverish energy marked, is the art which I should call modern art. Its very first roots were spreading when the Roman Empire was tending towards disruption; its last heavily fruited branches were aloft in air when feudal Europe first felt shaken by the coming storm of revolution in Church and State, and the crown of the new Holy Roman Empire was on the eve of changing from gold to tinsel. Three great buildings mark its first feeble beginning, its vigorous early life, its last hiding away beneath the rubbish heaps of pedantry and hopelessness. I venture to call those three buildings in their present state, the first the strangest, the second the most beautiful, the third the ugliest of the buildings raised in Europe before the nineteenth century. The first of these is the Palace of Diocletian at Spalato; the second, the Church of St Sophia at Constantinople; the third, the Church of St Peter at Rome.

At Spalato the movement of new life was first felt. There is much about the building that is downright ugly, still more that is but a mass of worn-out tradition; but there first, as far as we know, is visible the attempt to throw off the swathings of ill-understood Greek art, with which Roman architecture had encumbered itself, and to make that architecture reasonable, and consistent with the living principles of art. But at Spalato, though the art was trying to be alive, it was scarcely alive, and what life is in it is

shown in its construction only, and not in its ornamentation. Our second building, St Sophia, early as it is in the history of the art, has utterly thrown aside all pedantic encumbrances, and is most vigorously alive. It has gathered to itself all those elements of change which, having been kept apart for so long, were at last mingling and seething, and bringing about so many changes, so much of death and life. It is not bound by the past, but it has garnered all that there was in it which was fit to live and produce fresh life; it is the living child and the fruitful mother of art, past and future. That, even more than the loveliness which it drew forth from its own present, is what makes it the crown of all the great buildings of the world.

The new-born art was long in coming to this. Spalato was built about 313 A.D., St Sophia in 530. More than two hundred years are between them, by no means fertile of beautiful or remarkable buildings; but St Sophia once built, the earth began to blossom with beautiful buildings, and the thousand years that lie between the date of St Sophia and the date of St Peter at Rome may well be called the building age of the world. But when those years were over, in Italy at least, the change was fully come; and, as a symbol of that change, there stood on the site of the great mass of history and art which was once called the Basilica of St Peter, that new Church of St Peter which still curses the mightiest city of the world; the very type, it seems to me, of pride and tyranny, of all that crushes out the love of art in simple people, and makes art a toy of little estimation for the idle hours of the rich and cultivated. Between that time and this, art has been shut up in prison; all I can say of it in that condition is that I hope it has not died there. We can draw no lesson from its prison days save a spurring on to whatsoever of hope and indignant agitation for its release we may each of us be capable of. As an epoch of art it can teach us nothing; so the nearest possible period to our own days must stand for modern art; and to my mind that is the period between the days of the Emperor Justi-

nian and the Emperor Charles the Fifth; while we must call ancient art all the long period from the beginning of things to the time of Justinian and St Sophia of Constantinople.

The History of Pattern-Designing

And now I will set about my business of noting certain things which have happened to the very subordinate art of pattern-designing in its various changes, from those earliest days till the time when it was landed amidst that rich and varied time of modern art afore-mentioned. Let us consider what place it held among the ancient peoples, classical and barbarian; you will understand what I mean by those words without pressing home their literal meanings. Broadly speaking, one may say that the use of this subordinate, but by no means unimportant art is to enliven with beauty and incident what would otherwise be a blank space, whereso-ever or whatsoever it may be. The absolute necessities of the art are beauty of colour and restfulness of form. More definite qualities than these it need not have. Its colour may be brought about by the simplest combinations; its form may be merely that of abstract lines or spaces, and need not of necessity have any distinct meaning, or tell any story expressible in words. On the other hand, it is necessary to the purity of the art that its form and colour, when these bear any relation to the facts of nature (as for the more part they do), should be suggestive of such facts, and not descriptive of them.

Now all the art of the ancient historical world is in a way one, and has similar and sympathetic thoughts to express. I mean that there is a much wider gulf between the ideas of that part of ancient art which comes nearest in thought to modern, than there is between any two parts of ancient art that are furthest from one another. Nevertheless there are wide differences between the art of the different races of the ancient world. Ancient art, in fact, falls naturally into two divisions; the first is archaic, in style at least, if not always in date. It is mostly priestly and symbolic; lacking, willingly or not, the power of expressing natural facts defi-

nitely and accurately. It is mystic, wild, and elevated in its spiritual part, its soul; limited, incomplete, often grotesque in its form, its bodily part. The other ancient art is only priestly and symbolic accidentally, and not essentially. I mean that, since this priestly symbolism clung to it, it did not take the trouble to cast it off, but used it and expressed it; but would as willingly and easily have expressed purely intellectual or moral ideas. Furthermore, it is an art of perfection; it has perfectly attained the power of expressing what thoughts it allows itself, and will never forego any whit of that power, or tolerate any weakness or shortcoming in it. Whatever its soul may be, its body at least it will not have incomplete.

Of the first of these arts, ancient Egypt is the representative; of the second, classical Greece; and we must admit that in each of these systems the art of mere pattern-designing takes but an unimportant place. In Egyptian art, and the school which it represents, the picture-work itself was so limited by rule, so entirely suggestive only, that a certain canon of proportion having been once invented and established, it was easy and effortless work for a people who were full of feeling for quiet beauty; and, moreover, suggestion, not imitation, being the end aimed at, the picture-work easily, and without straining, fulfilled any office of decoration it was put to; so that the story which was necessary to be told on religious or public grounds became the very ornament which, merely as a matter of pleasant colour and line, the eye would most desire. In more modern and less forbearing art the pictured wall is apt to become a window through which a man quietly at work or resting looks on some great tragedy, some sad memory of the past, or terrible threat for the future. The constant companionship of such deeply emotional representations are too apt to trouble us at first, and at last to make us callous, because they are always claiming our attention, whether we are in a mood to be stirred by them or not. But in the older and more suggestive art the great subjects, symbolized rather than repre-

sented by its pictures, only reached the mind through the eye when the mind was awake and ready to receive them. The wall was a wall still, and not a window; nay, a book rather, where, if you would, you might read the stories of the gods and heroes, and whose characters, whether you read them or not, delighted you always with the beauty of their form and colour. Moreover, the expression of these great things being so well understood and so limited, it was not above the powers of execution of numbers of average workmen, and there was no danger of the holy and elevating subjects being treated absurdly or stupidly, so as to wound the feelings of serious men.

For all these reasons there is in the archaic or suggestive art of the ancients scarce any place for the elaborate pattern-designing which in later times men were driven more or less to put in the place of picture-work, now become more liable to ridiculous and ignoble failure, more exciting to the emotions, less restful, and therefore less beautiful than it had been.

On the other hand, in the perfect art of Greece the tendency was so decidedly towards fact of all kinds, that it could only give a very low place to ornament that had not a quite definite meaning; and its demand for perfection in quality of workmanship deprived effort of all hope of reward in this lower region of art, and crushed all experiment, all invention and imagination. In short, this perfect art preferred blankness to the richness that might be given by the work of an unrefined or imperfectly taught hand, whatever suggestions of beauty or thought might be in it; therefore, as in the art of Egypt picture-work was not thought too good to fill the place of the elaborate pattern-work we are thinking of, so in that of Greece mere emptiness was good enough for the purpose; so that in both cases there was no room for finished and complete pattern-designing; nor was there in any of the schools of ancient art, all of which, as aforesaid, tended either to the Greek or the Egyptian way of looking at things. So you see we are met

by this difficulty in the outset, that wishing to see whence our art of pattern-designing has been developed in the Ancient World, we find but little of any importance that looks like the seed of it. However, let us look at the matter a little closer, beginning with the art of Egypt. If it had no place for the elaborate and imaginative pattern-designs of modern art, at any rate it by no means loved blank spaces. Apart from the histories and the picture-writing which so often cover walls, pillars, and all, even smaller things, kings' robes, musical instruments, ship-sails, and the like, are striped and diapered with variety enough and with abundant fancy, invention, and delicacy. Many of these patterns are familiar to modern art; but to what extent they owe their presence there to the influence of Egypt I do not know, but rather suppose that they are the result of men's invention taking the same path in diverse times and places, and not of direct transmission; and this all the more as I cannot see that Greek pattern-designs follow the Egyptian work closely. One thing certainly strikes one about many of these early designs of Egypt which does connect them with what follows, and that is that they seem distinctly not only Eastern, but even African. Take as an indication of this their love for stripes and chequers, that look as if they were borrowed from the mat-maker's craft, and compare them with the work of African tribes and people, so late as up to our own time. The Egyptian love of colour is also of the East, and their boldness in the use of it, and the ease and success with which they put one bright tint beside another without shading or gradation. On this point it is interesting to note that whatever wilful shortcomings clung to ancient Egypt in its dealings with the higher forms of art, its skill in all handicrafts was a wonder and a lesson to the ancient world. Fourteen hundred years before Christ they understood perfectly what may fairly be called the mysteries of figure-weaving and dyeing, even the more abstruse part of the last craft, which is now represented by chintz-printing; they were skilled in glass-making and pottery,

not merely in the always early-acquired art of making a vessel that shall hold water, but in that of earthenware glazed with an opaque glaze variously coloured and figured; and lastly, they were as skilful joiners and cabinetmakers as their successors of modern Egypt, who are (or were) so clever in making the most of the little scraps of wood which an untimbered country affords them.

With all this, and strange as it may seem, I cannot see that this wonderful art which lasted so many hundred years, which had reached its blossoming-time fourteen hundred years before Christ, and was still in use in the second century after, has had much direct or lasting influence on the modern pattern-designer's art. Doubtless these flowers here look as if they might have been the prototypes of many that were drawn in the fourteenth century of our era; but you must remember that, though they are conventional and stiffly drawn, they are parts of a picture, and stand for the assertion that flowers grew in such and such a place. They are not used in mere fancy and sportiveness; which condition of art indeed, as I said before, will be found to be common to all these primitive archaic styles. Scarce anything is drawn which is not meant to tell a definite story; so that many of the members of the elaborate Egyptian diapers are symbols of the mysteries of nature and religion; as, for example, the lotus, the scarab, the winged orb, the hooded and winged serpent.

I suppose that there is no doubt that the gigantic and awful temples of Egypt are the earliest columnar buildings of which the world knows; nevertheless, I cannot think that the columnar Greek temple was derived from them, whatever of detail the Greeks borrowed frankly and obviously from them. The enormous and terrible scale on which they are designed, and especially the battering in of walls and door-jambs, which adds such gloom to these primeval buildings, surely shows that one at least, and that the most venerated, of the types of the Egyptian temple was a cave, and that their pillars are the masses left to support the huge

weight of the hillside; while, on the other hand, it is not easy to doubt that timber-building was the origin of the Greek temple. The Greek pillar was a wooden post, its lintel a timber beam, and the whole building a holy memory of the earlier days of the race and the little wooden hall that housed the great men and gods of the tribe. Nevertheless, the two forms of capital which have gone round the world, the cushion or lotus-bud form, and the bell-shaped or open-lily form, are certainly the forms of Egyptian capitals, nor has any other radical form been invented in architecture, or perhaps can be. Whether these have been taken consciously or unconsciously from the first finished art of the world who can affirm or deny?

Now before we venture to insult the aristocratically perfect art of Periclean Greece by making an important matter of what it despised, and trying to connect the work of its hewers of wood and drawers of water with the crafts of modern Europe, let us look a little into the art of another river-valley, the land between Tigris and Euphrates. This art is important enough to our immediate subject, quite apart from the wonderful historical interest of the great empires that ruled there; but there are left no such riches of antiquity to help us as in Egypt. Of Babylon, who was the mother of the arts of those regions, there is but little left, and that little not of the art in which she most excelled. What is left, joined to the derived art of Assyria, which is almost all that represents the earlier Babylonian art, seems to show us that if more yet had survived we might be nearer to solving the question of the origin of a great part of our pattern-designs; and this all the more as colour was an essential of its master-art. The Babylonians built in brick (sunburnt much of it), and ornamented their wall-spaces with painted pottery, which (taking the whole story into consideration) must surely have been the source from which flowed all the art of pottery of Persia, and the kindred or neighbour lands of the East. From the very nature of this art, there are but a few scraps of it left, as I have said, and

Assyrian art must fill the gap for us as well as it can. The great slabs of alabaster with which that people decorated the palaces raised on their mounds of sunburnt bricks, these things with which we are so familiar, that we are almost likely to forget the wonder that lies in them, tell us without a doubt what the type of Mesopotamian art was. It had started, like that of Egypt, from the archaic and priestly idea of art; but, in Assyrian days at least, had grown less venerable and more realistic, less beautiful also, and, if one may say so, possessed by a certain truculence both of form and spirit, which expresses well enough the ceaseless violence and robbery which is all that we have recorded of the history of Assyria. Its pattern-designing takes a lower place than that of Egypt, as far as we can judge in the absence or decay of what colour it once had. Its system of colour (one must needs judge from the fragments remaining) showed no great love for that side of the art, and was used rather to help the realism to which it tended, and which, had it lived longer, would most likely have driven it out of the path of monumental and decorative art. Nevertheless, by strange accidents in the course of history, there are some of the forms of its decoration that have been carried forward into the general mass of civilized art. A great part of its patterns, indeed, were diapers or powderings, like much of Egyptian work, only carried out in a bossy, rounded kind of relief, characteristic enough of its general tendencies. These minor and natural forms died out with the Assyrian monarchy; but several of its borderings were borrowed by the Greeks, doubtless through the Asiatic traders, who on their own wares seem to have used both Egyptian and Chaldean mythological figures without understanding their meaning, simply because they made pretty ornaments for a bowl or a vase. As an example of these running patterns, take the interlacement which we now nickname the guilloche, or the ornament called the honeysuckle, which I rather suppose to be a suggestion of a tuft of flowers and leaves breaking through the earth, and which

learned men think had a mystical meaning beyond that simple idea, like that other bordering, which, for want of a better name, I must call the flower and pine-cone.

There is another mystical ornament which we first come upon in Assyrian art, which we shall have to come to again, but which I must mention here, and which has played a strangely important part in the history of pattern-designing; this is the Holy Tree with its attendant guardian angels or demons. Almost all original styles have used this form; some, doubtless, as a religious symbol, most driven by vague tradition and allured by its convenience as a decorative form. I should call it the most important and widely spread piece of ornament ever invented.

Again, before we affront the majesty of Pallas Athene by looking curiously at her sleeve-hem, rather than reverently at herself, I must say a word about the conquerors of Assyria, the Persians. To us pattern-designers, Persia has become a holy land, for there in the process of time our art was perfected, and thence above all places it spread to cover for a while the world, east and west. But in the hierachy of ancient art the place of Persia is not high; its sculpture was borrowed directly from Assyrian and Babylonian art, and has not the life and vigour of its prototype; though some gain it has of architectural dignity, which the Aryan stock of the Persians accounts for, I think. Still more is this shown in the leap the Persians took in architecture proper. The palaces of the Assyrian kings do not know, or do not use the column; they are one and all a congeries of not very large chambers connected by doors very oddly placed. How they were roofed we can no longer tell; probably the smaller chambers had some kind of dome for a roof, and the larger no roof, only a sort of ledge projecting from the wall. The palace of the ancient Persians, on the other hand, was fairly made up of columns; the walls could not have been of much importance; the whole thing is as a forest of pillars that upholds the canopy over the summer-seat of the great king. For the rest, though this is the work of an Aryan race, that

race nad far to go and much to suffer before they could attain to the measured, grave, and orderly beauty which they alone of all races have learned to create, before they could attain to the divine art of reasonable architecture. The majesty of the ancient Persian columnar building is marred by extravagance and grotesquery of detail, which must be called ugliness; faults which it shares with the ancient architecture of India, of the earlier form of which it must have been an offshoot.

We have thus touched, lightly enough, on the principal styles of the archaic type of art; and have seen that our craft of pattern-designing was developed but slowly among them, and that, with few exceptions, its forms did not travel very far on the road of history. We are now come to that period of perfection which, as it were, draws a bar of light across the history of art, and is apt to dazzle us and blind us to all that lies on either side of it. As we pass from the Egyptian and Assyrian rooms at the British Museum and come upon the great groups of the Parthenon, full as we may be of admiration for the nobility of the Egyptian monuments, and the eager and struggling realism of Assyria, how our wonder rises as we look on the perfection of sculpture, cut off as it seems by an impassable gulf from all that has gone before it, the hopeless limitations, or the hopeless endeavours of the great mass of mankind! Nor can we help asking ourselves the question if art can go any further, or what there is to do after such work. Indeed the question is a hard one, and aftertimes of art, and even many cultivated people of to-day, may be blamed but lightly if they, in their helplessness, must needs answer: There is nothing to do but to imitate, and again to imitate, and to pick up what style the gods may give us amidst our imitation, even if we are driven to imitate the imitators. And yet, I must ask you above all things to join me in thinking that the question must be answered in quite a different way from this, unless we are to be for ever the barbarians which the Athenians of the time of Pericles would certainly, and not so wrongly,

have called us; for to me these works of perfection do not express everything which the archaic work suggested, and which they might have expressed if they had dared to try it: still less do they express all that the later work strove to express, often maybe with halting skill, seldom without some vision of the essence of things; which would have been lost to us for ever had they waited for the day, never to come, when the hand of man shall be equal to his thought, and no skill be lacking him to tell us of the height and depth of his aspirations. No, even these men of Ancient Greece had their limitations, nor was it altogether better with them than it is with us; the freedom of these free people was a narrow freedom. True, they lived a simple life, and did not know of that great curse and bane of art which we call luxury: yet was their society founded on slavery; slavery, mental as well as bodily, of the greater part of mankind, the iron exclusiveness which first bound their society, after no long while unsettled it, and at last destroyed it. When we think of all that classical art represents, and all that it hides and buries, of its pretensions and its shortcomings, surely we shall not accuse the Fates too loudly of blindness for overthrowing it, or think that the confusion and misery of the times that followed it was too great a price to pay for fresh life and its token, change of the forms of art which express men's thoughts.

Now if you should think I have got on to matters over serious for our small subject of pattern-designing, I will say, first, that even these lesser arts, being produced by man's intelligence, cannot really be separated from the greater, the more purely intellectual ones, or from the life which creates both; and next, that to my mind the tokens of the incompleteness of freedom among the classical peoples, and their aristocratic and rigid exclusiveness, are as obvious in one side of their art, as their glorious simplicity of life and respect for individuality of mind among the favoured few are obvious in the other side of it; and it is in our subject matter of to-day that their worser part shows.

The pattern-designs of Greek art, under a system which forbade any meddling with figure-work by men who could not draw the human figure unexceptionably, must have been the main resource of their lower artists, what we call artisans; they are generally, though not always, thoroughly well fitted for the purpose of decoration which they are meant to serve, but neither are, nor pretend to be, of any interest in themselves: they are graceful, indeed, where the Assyrian ones are clumsy, temperate where those of Egypt are over florid; but they have not, and do not pretend to have, any share of the richness, the mastery, or the individuality of nature, as much of the ornament of the earlier periods, and most of that of the later, has had. I must ask you not to misunderstand me and suppose that I think lightly of the necessity for the due and even severe subordination of architectural ornament; what I do want you to understand is, that the constant demand which Greek art made for perfection on every side was not an unmixed gain to it, for it made renunciation of many delightful things a necessity, and not unseldom drove it into being hard and unsympathetic. Of the system of Greek colour we can know very little, from the scanty remains that are left us. I think they painted much of their carving and sculpture in a way that would rather frighten our good taste—to hear of, I mean, though probably not to see. Some people, on the other hand, have supposed that they were all but colour-blind, a guess that we need not discuss at great length. What is to be said of it is, that certain words which to us express definite tints of colour are used in their literature, and that of Rome which imitated it, in such a way as to show that they noticed the difference between tones of colours more than that between tints. For the rest, it would be unreasonable to suppose that a people who despised the lesser arts, and who were on the look-out, first for scientific and historic facts, and next for beauty of form, should give themselves up to indulgence in the refinements of colour. The two conditions of mind are incompatible.

As to what the development of pattern-designs owes to Greek art, all that side of the craft which, coming directly and consciously from classical civilization, has helped to form the ornament of modern architecture, has, whoever invented the patterns, originally passed through the severe school of Greece, and thus been transmitted to us. Of all these ornamental forms the most important is that we choose to call the acanthus leaf, which was borne forward with the complete development of the column and capital. As I have said before, the form of the timber hall, with its low-pitched roof, its posts and beams, had got to be considered a holy form by the Greeks, and they did not care to carry dignified architecture further, or invent any more elaborate form of construction; but the prodigious care they took in refining the column with its cushion, or horned, or bell-shaped capital, impressed those forms on the world for ever, and especially the last of these, the bell-shaped one, whose special ornament was this glittering leafage we now call acanthus. No form of ornament has gone so far, or lasted so long as this; it has been infinitely varied, used by almost all following styles in one shape or another, and performed many another office besides its original one.

Now this question of the transmission of the forms of Greek architecture leads us at once to thinking of that of Rome, since it was by this road that all of it went which was consciously accepted as a gift of the classical times. The subject of the origin of all that is characteristic in Roman art is obscure enough, much too obscure for my little knowledge even to attempt to see into it; nay, even in speaking of it, I had better call it the art of the peoples collected under the Roman name, so that I may be understood to include all the influences that went to its creation. Now if we are asked what impression the gathered art of these peoples made upon modern art, I see nothing for it but to say that it invented architecture; no less. Before their time, indeed, temples took such and such forms among diverse nations, and such and such ornament grew on them; but

what else was done with these styles we really do not know; a frivolous pleasure-town built in a late period, and situate in Italy, which destruction, so to say, has preserved for us, being the only token left to show what a Greek house might perhaps have been like. For the rest, in spite of all the wonders of Greek sculpture, we must needs think that the Greeks had done little to fix the future architecture of the world: there was no elasticity or power of growth about the style; right in its own country, used for the worship and aspirations which first gave it birth, it could not be used for anything else. But with the architecture of the men of the Roman name it was quite different. In the first place they seized on the great invention of the arch, the most important invention to house-needing men that has been, or can be made. They did not invent it themselves of course, since it was known in ancient Egypt, and apparently not uncommon in brick-building Babylonia; but they were the first who used it otherwise than as an ugly necessity, and, in so using it, they settled what the architecture of civilization must henceforward be. Nor was their architecture, stately as it was, any longer fit for nothing but a temple, a holy railing for the shrine or symbol of the god; it was fit for one purpose as for another—church, house, aqueduct, market-place, or castle; nor was it the style of one country or one climate: it would fit itself to north or south, snow-storm or sand-storm alike. Though pedants might make inflexible rules for its practice when it was dead or dying, when it was alive it did not bind itself too strictly to rule, but followed, in its constructive part at least, the law of nature; in short, it was a new art, the great art of civilization.

True it is that what we have been saying of it applies to it as a style of building chiefly; in matters of ornament the arts of the conquered did completely take the conqueror captive, and not till the glory of Rome was waning, and its dominion become a tax-gathering machine, did it even begin to strive to shake off the fetters of Greece; and still, through all those centuries, the Roman lords of the world

thought the little timber god's-house a holy form, and necessary to be impressed on all stately architecture. It is a matter of course that the part of the architectural ornament of the Romans which may be definitely called pattern-design shared fully in this slavery; it was altered and somewhat spoiled Greek work, less refined and less forbearing. Great swinging scrolls, mostly formed of the acanthus foliage, not very various or delicate in their growth, mingled with heavy rolling flowers, form the main part of the Roman pattern-design that clave to the arts. There is no mystery in them, and little interest in their growth, though they are rich and handsome; indeed they scarcely do grow at all, they are rather stuck together; for the real connected pattern where one member grows naturally and necessarily out of another, where the whole thing is alive as a real tree or flower is, all this is an invention of what followed Roman art, and is unknown both to the classical and the ancient world. Nevertheless, this invention, when it came, clothed its soul in a body which was chiefly formed of the Graeco-Roman ornament, so that this splendid Roman scroll-work, though not very beautiful in itself, is the parent of very beautiful things. It is perhaps in the noble craft of the mosaic, which is a special craft of the Roman name, that the foreshadowing of the new art is best seen. In the remains of this art you may note the growing formation of more mysterious and more connected, as well as freer and more naturalistic design; their colour, often in spite of the limitation forced on the workman by simple materials, is skilfully arranged and beautiful; and, in short, there is a sign in them of the coming of the wave of that great change which was to turn late Roman art, the last of the old, into Byzantine art, the first of the new.

It lingered long. For long there was still some show of life in the sick art of the older world; that art had been so powerful, so systematized, that it was not easy to get rid even of its dead body. The first stirrings of change were felt in the master-art of architecture, or, once more, in the art

of building. As I said before in speaking of the earliest building that shows this movement, the Palace at Spalato, the ornamental side of the art lagged long behind the constructional. In that building you see for the first time the arch acting freely, and without the sham support of the Greek beam-architecture; henceforth, the five orders are but pieces of history, until the time when they were used by the new pedants of the Renaissance to enslave the world again.

Note now, that this first change of architecture marks a new world and new thoughts arising. Diocletian's palace was built but a few years before the Roman tyranny was rent in twain. When it was raised, that which men thought would last for ever had been already smitten with its death-stroke. Let your minds go back through all the centuries to look on the years that followed, and see how the whole world is changing; unheard-of peoples thrusting on into Europe; nation mingling with nation, and blood with blood; the old classical exclusiveness is gone for ever. Greek, Roman, Barbarian, are words still used, but the old meaning has departed from them; nay, even, they may mean pretty much the reverse of what they did. Dacians, Armenians, Arabs, Goths; from these come the captains of the Roman name; and when the Roman army goes afield, marching now as often to defeat as victory, it may well be that no Italian goes in its ranks to meet the enemies of Rome. More wonder is it, therefore, that the forms of the old world clave so close to art, than that a new art was slowly and unobtrusively getting ready to meet the new thoughts and aspirations of mankind; that modern art was near its birth, though modern Europe was born before its art was born.

Meanwhile let us turn aside from Europe to look for a little at the new birth of an ancient nation—Persia, to wit; and see what part it took in carrying on the forms of decoration from the old world into the new. I will ask you to remember that, after the contest between Persia and Greece

had been ended by Alexander, and when his dream of a vast European-Asiatic Empire, infused throughout with Hellenic thought and life, had but brought about various knots of anarchical and self-seeking tyrannies, a new and masterful people changed the story; and Persia, with the surrounding countries, fell under the dominion of the Parthians, a people of a race whose office in the furthering of civilization is perhaps the punishment of its crimes. The ancient Parthians, like the modern Ottomans, scarcely mingled with the nations which they conquered, but rather encamped among them. Like the Ottomans, also, the decline of their warlike powers by no means kept pace with the decline of their powers of rule, or the steady advance of their inevitable doom. Artabanus, the last of the Parthian kings, turned from the victorious field of Nisibis, where he had overcome the men of the Roman name, to meet the rising of his Persian subjects; which, in three days of bloody battle, swept away his life and the dominion of his race. A curious lesson, by the way, to warring tyrannies. The Roman Empire had contended long with the Parthian kingdom, had wrested many a province from it and weakened it sorely, all for this, that it might give birth to the greatest and most dangerous enemy of the Roman Empire, and one who was soon to humiliate it so grievously.

Now as to the art of these kingdoms. That of the Parthians must be set aside by treating it in the way which was used by the worthy Norwegian merchant in writing of the snakes in Iceland; there was no art among the Parthians, no native art, that is to say, and scarcely any borrowed art which they made quasi-native. In earlier times Greek hands fashioned their coins and such-like matters; in later they borrowed their art from the borrowed art of their Persian subjects, with whom, doubtless, they were often confused by classical writers. Neither can I say that of the art of the new-born Persian kingdom there is much left that is important in itself. I have said that much of the art of Achaemenian Persia was borrowed directly from Assyria,

its wild and strange columnar architecture being the only part of it that seems to bear any relation to the Aryan race. For three hundred and fifty years the Persians lay under the domination of Turan, and certainly, to judge from what we know of their architecture during and after that time, they were not receptive of ideas from other branches of their race.

The most notable works of the new-born or Sassanian Kingdom of Persia are certain rock-sculptured monuments of diverse dates, the earliest being that which commemorates Sapor the Great, and his triumph over the Roman Emperor Valerian, which happened in 260, only forty years after Artaxerxes, the first Sassanian king, had overthrown and slain the last of the Parthians on the field of Hormuz. To my mind these sculptures still show the influence of that Assyrian or Chaldean art, which is the first form that art took in Persia, though they are by no means lacking in original feeling, and are obviously and most interestingly careful in matters of costume, the Romans being dressed as Romans, and the Persians in their national dress; the chief difference between this and the costume of the Achaemenian time being in the strange and, I suppose, symbolical head-dress of Sapor himself, who wears over his crown an enormous globe, seemingly made of some light material inflated. There is no mere ornamental detail in these sculptures; but in a monument to Chosroes the Second, whose reign began in 590, there is a good deal of it; and in this the Chaldean influence is unmistakable, and all the more marked, since it is mingled with visible imitation of late Roman figure-sculpture as well as with inferior work of the kind found in Sapor's monument. The existence of this Chaldean influence is all the more important to note because of its late date.

Besides these sculptured works, there are also left in Persia and Mesopotamia some remains of important Sassanian buildings, which, however scanty, are of great interest. To what earlier style is due the origin of their characteristic

features it would be impossible to say; but one thing is clear to me, that some of those features at least have been fixed on modern Persian architecture; as, for example, the egg-shaped dome, and the great cavernous porch with the small doorway pierced in its inside wall, both of which features are special characteristics of that modern Persian architecture which is in fact the art of the Mussulman world. A word must be said further on a feature of the Sassanian architecture that lies nearer to our subject, the capitals of columns still existing. The outline of these is curiously like that of fully developed Byzantine architecture; the carved ornament on them is in various degrees influenced by ancient Chaldean art, being in some cases identical with the later Assyrian pattern-work, in others mingled with impressions of Roman ornament; but the general effect of them in any case shows a very remarkable likeness to the ruder capitals of the time of Justinian, more especially to his work at Ravenna, a fact to be carefully noted in connection with the development of that art.

Some very rich and lovely architectural carving at the palace of Mashita, wrought late in the Sassanian time, about 630, bears a strong resemblance to elaborate Byzantine work at its best; it might almost be work of Comnenian Greeks at Venice or Milan: nevertheless, and this also I beg you to remember, it is as like as possible to designs on carpets and tiles done nearly a thousand years after the battle of Cadesia, under the rule of Shah Abbas the Great. Furthermore, I believe the Persians have preserved and handed down to later ages certain forms of ornament which, above all, must be considered parts of pattern-designing, and which have clung to that art with singular tenacity. These forms are variations of the mystic symbols of the Holy Tree, and the Holy Fire. The subject of the shapes these have taken, and the reasons for their use and the diversities of them, is a difficult and obscure one; so I must, before I go further, remind you that I lay no claims to mythological and ethnological learning, and if I blunder while I touch on

these subjects (as I cannot help doing) I shall be very glad of correction from any one who understands this recondite subject.

However, what I have noticed of these in my studies as a pattern-designer is this. There are two symbols; the one is a tree, more or less elaborately blossomed, and supported, as heralds say, by two living creatures, genii, partly or wholly man-like, or animals, sometimes of known kinds, lions or the like, sometimes invented monsters; the other symbol is an altar with a flame upon it, supported by two living creatures, sometimes man-like, sometimes beast-like. Now these two symbols are found, one or other, or both of them, in almost all periods of art; the Lion Gate at Mycenae will occur to all of you as one example. I have seen a very clear example figured, which is on a pot found in Attica, of the very earliest period. The Holy Tree is common in Assyrian art, the Holy Fire is found in it. The Holy Fire with the attendant figures, priests in this case always, is on the coins of all the Sassanian kings; the Holy Tree, supported by lions, is found in Sassanian art also. Now it is clear that the two symbols are apt to become so much alike in rude representations that sometimes it is hard to say whether the supporters have the tree or the fire-altar between them; and this seems to have puzzled those who used them after the Sassanian period, when, doubtless, they had forgotten or perverted their original meaning. They are used very often in Byzantine art in carvings and the like, where again they sometimes take another form of peacocks drinking from a fountain; but of all things are commonest perhaps in the silken stuffs that were wrought in Greece, Syria, Egypt, and at last in Sicily and Lucca, between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries. In these, at first, it was a toss-up whether the thing between the creatures should be the altar or the tree, though the latter was always commonest; but at last the tree won the day, I imagine rather because it was prettier than for any more abstruse reason; still, even in quite late times, the fire crops up again at whiles. I should mention

also, that in these later representations man-like figures are seldom, if ever, seen; beasts of all kinds, from giraffes to barn-door fowls, take their place.

It would be absurd of me to attempt to be authoritative as to the meaning of these far-travelling symbols; but I may perhaps be allowed to say that both the fire and the tree are symbols of life and creation, and that, when the central object is obviously a fire, the supporters are either ministers of the altar or guardian spirits. As to the monsters supporting the tree, they also, I suppose, may be guardians. I have, however, seen a different guess at their meaning; to wit, that they represent the opposing powers of good and evil that form the leading idea of the dualism that fixed itself to the ancient Zoroastrian creed, the creed in which the Light and the Fire had become the recognized symbol of deity by the time of the Sassanian monarchs. I cannot pretend to say what foundation there may be for this theory, which would fuse the two symbols into one. The only thing I feel pretty certain of is this: that whatever the forms may mean, they are never found but among peoples who, it may be at the end of a very long chain, have had some dealings with the country between the two Rivers; that they therefore are Chaldean in origin; that, though they have been transmitted by other means in earlier days, it is to the Sassanian Persians that we owe their presence in modern art. But it is not difficult to see that such an incomplete and even languid art as that of new-born Persia, which had but little character of its own, at any rate on its ornamental side, would have had no strength to carry these strange figures so far; figures which, I repeat, have played a greater part than any others among the pattern-designs of Europe and the East, however those who used them might be unconscious of their meaning. It was on another and mightier art that they were borne. The influence of Persia, indeed, was felt amongst a people ready to receive it, in a time that was agape to take in something new to fill the void which the death of classical art had made; but other influences were at work among the

people whose mother city was New Rome, which was a kind of knot to all the many thrums of the varied life of the first days of modern Europe.

While men slept a new art was growing up in that strange empire on which so many centuries of change still thrust the name of Rome, although the deeds and power of Rome were gone from it. Many of you have doubtless heard this art spoken of with contempt as the mere dregs of the dying art of the ancient world. Well, doubtless death was busy among what was left of the art of antiquity, but it was a death that bore new quickening with it; it was a corruption which was drawing to it elements of life of which the classical world knew nothing; and the chief element of life that it gave expression to was freedom, the freedom of the many, in the realm of art at least. In the earlier days the workman had nought to do but to grind through his day's work, stick tightly to his gauge lest he be beaten or starved, and then go; but now he was rising under the load of contempt that crushed him, and could do something that people would stop to look at no less than the more intellectual work of his better-born fellow. What has come of that in later times, nay, what may yet come of it in days that we shall not live to see, we may not consider now. But one thing came of it in those earlier days; an architecture which was pure in its principles, reasonable in its practice, and beautiful to the eyes of all men, even the simplest: which is a thing, mind you, which can never exist in any state of society under which men are divided into intellectual castes.

It was a matter of course that the art of pattern-designing should fully share in this exaltation of the master art. Now at last, and only now, it began to be really delightful in itself; good reason why, since now at last the mind of a man happy in his work did more or less guide all hands that wrought it. No beauty in the art has ever surpassed the beauty of those its first days of joy and freedom; the days of gain without loss, the time of boundless hope. I say of gain without loss: the qualities of all the past styles which had built it up are

there, with all that it has gained of new. The great rolling curves of the Roman acanthus have not been forgotten, but they have had life, growth, variety, and refinement infused into them; the clean-cut accuracy and justness of line of one side of Greek ornament has not been forgotten either, nor the straying wreath-like naturalism of the other side of it; but the first has gained a crisp sparkling richness, and a freedom and suggestion of nature which it had lacked before; and the second, which was apt to be feeble and languid, has gained a knitting-up of its lines into strength, and an interest in every curve, which make it like the choice parts of the very growths of nature. Other gain it has of richness and mystery, the most necessary of all the qualities of pattern-work, that without which, indeed, it must be kept in the strictly subordinate place which the scientific good taste of Greece allotted to it. Where did it get those qualities from? If the art of the East had been what it has since become, we might perhaps answer, from the East; but this is by no means the case. On the contrary, though, as I have said or implied above, Byzantine art borrowed forms from Persia and Chaldea at the back of her, nothing is more certain, to my mind, than that Byzantine art made Eastern art what it became; that the art of the East has remained beautiful so long because for so many centuries it practised the lessons which New Rome first taught it. Indeed, I think the East had much to do with the new life of this true Renaissance, but indirectly. The influence of its thought, its strange mysticism that gave birth to such wild creeds, its looking towards equality amidst all the tyranny of kings that crushed all men alike—these things must have had then, and long before, great influence on men's thoughts at the verge of Europe and Asia.

But surely, when we have sought our utmost for the origins of all the forms of that great body of the expression of men's thoughts which I have called modern art (you may call it Gothic art if you will, little as the Goths dealt with it), when we have sought and found much, we shall still have to confess that there is no visible origin for the thing that gave

life to those forms. All we can say is that when the Roman tyranny grew sick, when that recurring curse of the world, a dominant race, began for a time to be shaken from its hold, men began to long for the freedom of art; and that, even amidst the confusion and rudeness of a time when one civilization was breaking up that another might be born of it, the mighty impulse which this longing gave to the expression of thought created speedily a glorious art, full of growth and hope, in the only form which in such a time art could take, architecture to wit; which, of all the forms of art, is that which springs direct from popular impulse, from the partnership of all men, great and little, in worthy and exalting aspirations.

So was modern or Gothic art created; and never, till the time of that death or cataleptic sleep of the so-called Renaissance, did it forget its origin, or fail altogether in fulfilling its mission of turning the ancient curse of labour into something more like a blessing. As to the way in which it did its work, as I have no time, so also I have but little need to speak, since there is none of us but has seen and felt some portion of the glory which is left behind, but has shared some portion of that most kind gift it gave the world; for even in this our turbulent island, the home of rough and homely men, so far away from the centres of art and thought which I have been speaking of, did simple folk labour for those that should come after them. Here, in the land we yet love, they built their homes and temples; if not so majestically as many peoples have done, yet in such sweet accord with the familiar nature amidst which they dwelt, that when by some happy chance we come across the work they wrought, untouched by any but natural change, it fills us with a satisfying untroubled happiness that few things else could bring us. Must our necessities destroy, must our restless ambition mar, the sources of this innocent pleasure, which rich and poor may share alike, this communion with the very hearts of departed men? Must we sweep away these touching memories of our stout forefathers and their troub-

lous days, that won our present peace and liberties? If our necessities compel us to it, I say we are an unhappy people; if our vanity lure us into it, I say we are a foolish and light-minded people, who have not the wits to take a little trouble to avoid spoiling our own goods. Our own goods? Yes, the goods of the people of England, now and in time to come; we who are now alive are but life-renters of them. Any of us who pretend to any culture know well that, in destroying or injuring one of these buildings, we are destroying the pleasure, the culture, in a word, the humanity of unborn generations. It is speaking very mildly to say that we have no right to do this for our temporary convenience; it is speaking too mildly. I say any such destruction is an act of brutal dishonesty. Do you think such a caution is unnecessary? how I wish that I could think so! It is a grievous thing to have to say, but say it I must, that the one most beautiful city of England, the city of Oxford, has been ravaged for many years past, not only by ignorant and interested tradesmen, but by the University and College authorities. Those whose special business it is to direct the culture of the nation have treated the beauty of Oxford as if it were a matter of no moment, as if their commercial interests might thrust it aside without any consideration. To my mind in so doing they have disgraced themselves.

For the rest, I will say it, that I think the poor remains of our ancient buildings in themselves, as memorials of history and works of art, are worth more than any temporary use they can be put to. Yes, apply it to Oxford if you please. There are many places in England where a young man may get as good book-learning as in Oxford; not one where he can receive the education which the loveliness of the grey city used to give us. Call this sentiment if you please, but you know that it is true. Before I go further let me tell you that our Society has had much to do in cases of what I should call the commercial destruction of buildings; that we have carefully examined these cases to see if we had any ground to stand on for resisting the destruction; that we have argued

the matter threadbare on all sides; and that above all we have always tried to suggest some possible use that the buildings could be put to. As a branch of this subject, I must ask leave to add, at the risk of wearying you, that the Society has taken great pains (and been sometimes called rude for it, if that mattered) to try to get guardians of ancient buildings to repair their buildings. For we know well, by doleful experience, how quickly a building gets infirm if it be neglected. There are plenty of cases where a parish or a parson will spend two or three thousand pounds on ecclesiastical finery for a church, and let the rain sap the roof all the while; such things are apt to make the most polite people rude.

I have one last word to say on the before-mentioned restless vanity that so often mars the gift our fathers have given us. Its results have a technical name now, and are called Restoration. Don't be afraid. I am going to say very little about it; my plea against it is very simple. I have pleaded it before, but it seems to me so unanswerable that I will do so again, even if it be in the same words. Yet first let me say this: I love art, and I love history; but it is living art and living history that I love. If we have no hope for the future, I do not see how we can look back on the past with pleasure. If we are to be less than men in time to come, let us forget that we have ever been men. It is in the interest of living art and living history that I oppose so-called restoration. What history can there be in a building bedaubed with ornament, which cannot at the best be anything but a hopeless and lifeless imitation of the hope and vigour of the earlier world? As to the art that is concerned in it, a strange folly it seems to me for us who live among these bricken masses of hideousness to waste the energies of our short lives in feebly trying to add new beauty to what is already beautiful. Is that all the surgery we have for the curing of England's spreading sore? Don't let us vex ourselves to cure the antepenultimate blunders of the world, but fall to on our own blunders. Let us leave the dead alone, and, ourselves living, build for the living and those that shall live.

Meantime, my plea for our Society is this, that since it is disputed whether restoration be good or not, and since we are confessedly living in a time when architecture has come on the one hand to jerry-building, and on the other to experimental designing (good, very good experiments some of them), let us take breath and wait; let us sedulously repair our ancient buildings, and watch every stone of them as if they were built of jewels (as indeed they are), but otherwise let the dispute rest till we have once more learned architecture, till we once more have among us a reasonable, noble, and universally used style. Then let the dispute be settled. I am not afraid of the issue. If that day ever comes, we shall know what beauty, romance, and history mean, and the technical meaning of the word restoration will be forgotten. Is not this a reasonable plea? It means prudence. If the buildings are not worth anything they are not worth restoring; if they are worth anything, they are at least worth treating with common sense and prudence. Come now, I invite you to support the most prudent Society in all England.

THE LESSER ARTS OF LIFE. A LECTURE DELIVERED IN SUPPORT OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS.

THE Lesser Arts of Life may not seem to some of you worth considering, even for an hour. In these brisk days of the world, amidst this high civilization of ours, we are too eager and busy, it may be said, to take note of any form of art that does not either stir our emotions deeply, or strain the attention of the most intellectual part of our minds. Now for this rejection of the lesser arts there may be something to be said, supposing it be done in a certain way and with certain ends in view; nevertheless it seems to me that the lesser arts, when they are rejected, are so treated for no sufficient reason, and to the injury of the community; therefore I feel no shame in standing before you as a professed pleader and advocate for them, as indeed I well may, since it is through them that I am the servant of the public, and earn my living with abundant pleasure.

Then comes the question, What are to be considered the Lesser Arts of Life? I suppose there might be pros and cons argued on that question, but I doubt if the argument would be worth the time and trouble it would cost; nevertheless I want you to agree with me in thinking that these lesser arts are really a part of the greater ones which only a man or two here and there (among cultivated people) will venture to acknowledge that he contemns, whatever the real state of the case may be on that matter. The Greater Arts of Life, what are they? Since people may use the word in very different senses, I will say, without pretending to give a definition, that what I mean by an art is some creation of man which appeals to his emotions and his intellect by means of his senses. All the greater arts appeal directly to that intricate combination of intuitive perceptions, feelings, experience, and memory which is called imagination. All artists, who deal with those arts, have these qualities superabundantly, and have them balanced in such exquisite order that they

can use them for purposes of creation. But we must never forget that all men who are not naturally deficient, or who have not been spoiled by defective or perverse education, have imagination in some measure, and also have some of the order which guides it; so that they also are partakers of the greater arts, and the masters of them have not to speak under their breath to half-a-dozen chosen men, but rather their due audience is the whole race of man properly and healthily developed. But as you know, the race of man, even when very moderately civilized, has a great number of wants which have to be satisfied by the organized labour of the community. From father to son, from generation to generation, there has grown up a body of almost mysterious skill, which has exercised itself in making the tools for carrying on the occupation of living; so that a very large part of the audience of the masters of the greater arts have been engaged like them in making things; only the higher men were making things wholly to satisfy men's spiritual wants; the lower, things whose first intention was to satisfy their bodily wants. But though, in theory, all these could be satisfied without any expression of the imagination, any practice of art, yet history tells us what we might well have guessed would be the case, that the thing could not stop there. Men whose hands were skilled in fashioning things could not help thinking the while, and soon found out that their deft fingers could express some part of the tangle of their thoughts, and that this new pleasure hindered not their daily work, for in the very labour that they lived by lay the material in which their thought could be embodied; and thus, though they laboured, they laboured somewhat for their pleasure and uncompelled, and had conquered the curse of toil, and were men.

Here, then, we have two kinds of art: one of them would exist even if men had no needs but such as are essentially spiritual, and only accidentally material or bodily. The other kind, called into existence by material needs, is bound no less to recognize the aspirations of the soul and receives the im-

press of its striving towards perfection. If the case be as I have represented it, even the lesser arts are well worthy the attention of reasonable men, and those who despise them must do so either out of ignorance as to what they really are, or because they themselves are in some way or other enemies of civilization, either outlaws from it or corrupters of it.

As to the outlaws from civilization, they are those of whom I began by saying that there are or were people who rejected the arts of life on grounds that we could at least understand, if we could not sympathize with the rejecters. There have been in all ages of civilization men who have acted, or had a tendency to act, on some such principle as the following words represent: The world is full of grievous labour, the poor toiling for the rich, and ever remaining poor; with this we, at least, will have nought to do; we cannot amend it, but we will not be enriched by it, nor be any better than the worst of our fellows. Well, this is what may be called the monk's way of rejecting the arts, whether he be Christian monk, or Buddhist ascetic, or ancient philosopher. I believe he is wrong, but I cannot call him enemy. Sometimes I can't help thinking, Who knows but what the whole world may come to that for a little? the field of art may have to lie fallow a while that the weeds may be known for what they are, and be burnt in the end. I say that I have at least respect for the dwellers in the tub of Diogenes; indeed I don't look upon it as so bad a house after all. With a plane-tree and a clear brook near it, and some chance of daily bread and onions, it will do well enough. I have seen worse houses to let for seven hundred pounds a year. But, mind you, it must be the real thing. The tub of Diogenes lined with padded drab velvet, lighted by gas, polished and cleaned by vicarious labour, and expecting every morning due visits from the milkman, the baker, the butcher, and the fishmonger, that is a cynical dwelling which I cannot praise. If we are to be excused for rejecting the arts, it must be not because we are contented to be less than men, but because we long to be more than men.

For I have said that there are some rejecters of the arts

who are corrupters of civilization. Indeed, they do not altogether reject them; they will eat them and drink them and wear them, and use them as lackeys to eke out their grandeur, and as nets to catch money with, but nothing will they learn or care about them. They will push them to the utmost as far as the satisfying of their material needs go, they will increase the labour infinitely that produces material comfort, but they will reach no helping hand to that which makes labour tolerable; and they themselves are but a part of the crowd that toils without an aim; for they themselves labour with tireless energy to multiply the race of man, and then make the multitude unhappy. Therefore let us pity them, that they have been born coarse, violent, unjust, inhuman; let us pity them, yet resist them. For these things they do unwitting indeed, but are none the less oppressors; oppressors of the arts, and therefore of the people, who have a right to the solace which the arts alone can give to the life of simple men. Well, these men are, singly or in combination, the rich and powerful of the world; they rule civilization at present, and if it were not through ignorance that they err, those who see the fault and lament it would indeed have no choice but to reject all civilization with the ascetic; but since they are led astray unwittingly, there is belike a better way to resist their oppression than by mere renunciation. I say that if there were no other way of resisting those oppressors of the people, whom we call in modern slang Philistines, save the monk's or ascetic's way, that is the way all honest men would have to take whose eyes were opened to the evil. But there is another way of resistance, which I shall ask your leave to call the citizen's way, who says: There is a vast deal of labour spent in supplying civilized man with things which he has come to consider needful, and which, as a rule, he will not do without. Much of that labour is grievous and oppressive; but since there is much more of grievous labour in the world than there used to be, it is clear that there is more than there need be, and more than there will be in time to come, if only men of goodwill look to it; what therefore

can we do towards furthering that good time and reducing the amount of grievous labour: first, by abstaining from multiplying our material wants unnecessarily, and secondly, by doing our best to introduce the elements of hope and pleasure into all the labour with which we have anything to do?

These, I think, are the principles on which the citizen's resistance to Philistine oppression must be founded: to do with as few things as we can, and as far as we can to see to it that these things are the work of freemen and not of slaves; these two seem to me to be the main duties to be fulfilled by those who wish to live a life at once free and refined, serviceable to others, and pleasant to themselves. Now it is clear that if we are to fulfil these duties we must take active interest in the arts of life which supply men's material needs, and know something about them, so that we may be able to distinguish slaves' work from freemen's, and to decide what we may accept and what we must renounce of the wares that are offered to us as necessaries and comforts of life. It is to help you to a small fragment of this necessary knowledge that I am standing before you with this word in my mouth, the Lesser Arts of Life. Of course it is only on a few of these that I have anything to say to you, but of those that I shall speak I believe I know something, either as a workman or a very deeply interested onlooker; wherefore I shall ask your leave to speak quite plainly, and without fear or favour.

You understand that our ground is that not only is it possible to make the matters needful to our daily life works of art, but that there is something wrong in the civilization that does not do this: if our houses, our clothes, our household furniture and utensils are not works of art, they are either wretched makeshifts or, what is worse, degrading shams of better things. Furthermore, if any of these things make any claim to be considered works of art, they must show obvious traces of the hand of man guided directly by his brain, without more interposition of machines than is absolutely necessary to the nature of the work done. Again,

whatsoever art there is in any of these articles of daily use must be evolved in a natural and unforced manner from the material that is dealt with: so that the result will be such as could not be got from any other material; if we break this law we shall make a triviality, a toy, not a work of art. Lastly, love of nature in all its forms must be the ruling spirit of such works of art as we are considering; the brain that guides the hand must be healthy and hopeful, must be keenly alive to the surroundings of our own days, and must be only so much affected by the art of past times as is natural for one who practises an art which is alive, growing, and looking toward the future.

Asking you to keep these principles in mind, I will now, with your leave, pass briefly over the Lesser Arts with which I myself am conversant. Yet, first, I must mention an art which, though it ministers to our material needs, and therefore, according to what I have said as to the division between purely spiritual and partly material arts, should be reckoned among the Lesser Arts, has, to judge by its etymology, not been so reckoned in times past, for it has been called Architecture; nevertheless it does practically come under the condemnation of those who despise the lesser or more material arts; so please allow me to reckon it among them. Now, speaking of the whole world and at all times, it would not be quite correct to say that the other arts could not exist without it; because there both have been and are large and important races of mankind who, properly speaking, have no architecture, who are not house-dwellers, but tent-dwellers, and who, nevertheless, are by no means barren of the arts. For all that it is true that these non-architectural races (let the Chinese stand as a type of them) have no general mastery over the arts, and seem to play with them rather than to try to put their souls into them. Clumsy-handed as the European or Aryan workman is (of a good period, I mean) as compared with his Turanian fellow, there is a seriousness and meaning about his work that raises it as a piece of art far above the deftness of China and Japan; and it is this very seriousness

and depth of feeling which, when brought to bear upon the matters of our daily life, is in fact the soul of architecture, whatever the body may be; so that I shall still say that among ourselves, the men of modern Europe, the existence of the other arts is bound up with that of Architecture. Please do not forget that, whatever else I may say to-day, you must suppose me to assume that we have noble buildings which we have to adorn with our lesser arts: for this art of building is the true democratic art, the child of the man-inhabited earth, the expression of the life of man thereon. I claim for our Society no less a position than this, that in calling on you to reverence the examples of noble building, and to understand and protect the continuity of its history, it is guarding the very springs of all art, of all cultivation.

Now I would not do this noble art such disrespect as to speak of it in detail as only a part of a subject. I would not treat it so even in its narrower sense as the art of building; its wider sense I consider to mean the art of creating a building with all the appliances fit for carrying on a dignified and happy life. The arts I have to speak of in more detail are a part, and comparatively a small part, of Architecture considered in that light; but there is so much to be said even about these, when we have once made up our mind that they are worth our attention at all, that you must understand that my talk to-night will simply be hints to draw your attention to the subjects in question.

I shall try, then, to give you some hints on these arts or crafts: pottery and glass-making; weaving, with its necessary servant dyeing; the craft of printing patterns on cloth and on paper; furniture; and also, with fear and trembling, I will say a word on the art of dress. Some of these are lesser arts with a vengeance; only you see I happen to know something about them practically, and so venture to speak of them.

So let us begin with pottery, the most ancient and universal, as it is perhaps (setting aside house-building) the most important of the lesser arts, and one, too, the con-

sideration of which recommends itself to us from a more or less historical point of view, because, owing to the indestructibility of its surface, it is one of the few domestic arts of which any specimens are left to us of the ancient and classical times. Now all nations, however barbarous, have made pottery, sometimes of shapes obviously graceful, sometimes with a mingling of wild grotesquery amid gracefulness; but none have ever failed to make it on true principles, none have made shapes ugly or base till quite modern times. I should say that the making of ugly pottery was one of the most remarkable inventions of our civilization. All nations with any turn for art have speedily discovered what capabilities for producing beautiful form lie in the making of an earthen pot of the commonest kind, and what opportunities it offers for the reception of swift and unlaborious, but rich ornament; and how nothing hinders that ornament from taking the form of representation of history and legend. In favour of this art the classical nations relaxed the artistic severity that insisted otherwhere on perfection of figure-drawing in architectural work; and we may partly guess what an astonishing number of capable and ready draughtsmen there must have been in the good times of Greek art from the great mass of first-rate painting on pottery, garnered from the tombs mostly, and still preserved in our museums after all these centuries of violence and neglect.

Side by side with the scientific and accomplished work of the Greeks, and begun much earlier than the earliest of it, was being practised another form of the art in Egypt and the Euphrates valley; it was less perfect in the highest qualities of design, but was more elaborate in technique, which elaboration no doubt was forced into existence by a craving for variety and depth of colour and richness of decoration, which did not press heavily on the peoples of the classical civilization, who, masters of form as they were, troubled themselves but little about the refinements of colour. This art has another interest for us in the fact that

from it sprang all the great school of pottery which has flourished in the East, apart from the special and peculiar work of China. Though the fictile art of that country is a development of so much later date than what we have just been considering, let us make a note of it here as the third kind of potter's work, which no doubt had its origin in the exploitation of local material joined to the peculiar turn of the Chinese workmanship for finesse of manual skill and for boundless patience.

Northern Europe during the Middle Ages, including our own country, could no more do without a native art of pottery than any other simple peoples; but the work done by them being very rough, and serving for the commonest domestic purposes (always with the exception of certain tile-work), had not the chance of preservation which superstition gave to the Greek pottery, and very little of it is left; that little shows us that our Gothic forefathers shared the pleasure in the potter's wheel and the capabilities of clay for quaint and pleasant form and fanciful invention which has been common to most times and places, and this rough craft even lived on as a village art till almost the days of our grandfathers, turning out worthy work enough, done in a very unconscious and simple fashion on the old and true principles of art, side by side with the whims and inanities which mere fashion had imposed on so-called educated people.

Every one of these forms of art, with many another which I have no time to speak of, was good in itself; the general principles of them may be expressed somewhat as follows. First. Your vessel must be of a convenient shape for its purpose. Second. Its shape must show to the greatest advantage the plastic and easily-worked nature of clay; the lines of its contour must flow easily; but you must be on the look-out to check the weakness and languidness that comes from striving after over-elegance. Third. All the surface must show the hand of the potter, and not be finished with a baser tool. Fourth. Smoothness and high finish of

surface, though a quality not to be despised, is to be sought after as a means for gaining some special elegance of ornament, and not as an end for its own sake. Fifth. The commoner the material the rougher the ornament, but by no means the scantier; on the contrary, a pot of fine materials may be more slightly ornamented, both because all the parts of the ornamentation will be minuter, and also because it will in general be considered more carefully. Sixth. As in the making of the pot, so in its surface ornament, the hand of the workman must be always visible in it; it must glorify the necessary tools and necessary pigment: swift and decided execution is necessary to it; whatever delicacy there may be in it must be won in the teeth of the difficulties that will result from this; and because of these difficulties the delicacy will be more exquisite and delightful than in easier arts where, so to say, the execution can wait for more laborious patience. These, I say, seem to me the principles that guided the potter's art in the days when it was progressive: it began to cease to be so in civilized countries somewhat late in that period of blight which was introduced by the so-called Renaissance. Excuse a word or two more of well-known history in explanation. Our own pottery of Northern Europe, made doubtless without any reference to classical models, was very rude, as I have said; it was fashioned of natural clay, glazed when necessary transparently with salt or lead, and the ornament on it was done with another light-coloured clay, sometimes coloured further with metallic oxides under the glaze. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the more finished work, which had its origin, as before mentioned, in Egypt and the Euphrates valley, was introduced into Southern Europe through Moorish or rather Arab Spain, and other points of contact between Europe and the East. This ware, known now as Majolica, was of an earthen body covered with opaque white glaze, ornamented with colours formed of oxides, some of which were by a curious process reduced into a metallic state, giving thereby strange and beautiful lustrous colours.

This art quickly spread through Italy, and for a short time was practised there with very great success, but was not much taken up by the nations of Northern Europe, who for the most part went on making the old lead or salt glazed earthenware; the latter, known as Grès de Cologne, still exists as a rough manufacture in the border lands of France and Germany, though I should think it is not destined to live much longer otherwise than as a galvanized modern antique.

When Italy was still turning out fine works in the Majolica wares much of the glory of the Renaissance was yet shining; but the last flicker of that glory had died out by the time that another form of Eastern art invaded our European pottery. Doubtless the folly of the time would have found another instrument for destroying whatever of genuine art was left among our potters if it had not had the work of China ready to hand, but it came to pass that this was the instrument that finally made nonsense of the whole craft among us. True it is that a very great proportion of the Chinese work imported consisted of genuine works of art of their kind, though mostly much inferior to the work of Persia, Damascus, or Granada; but the fact is, it was not the art in it that captivated our forefathers, but its grosser and more material qualities. The whiteness of the paste, the hardness of the glaze, the neatness of the painting, and the consequent delicacy, or luxuriousness rather, of the ware, were the qualities that the eighteenth-century potters strove so hard to imitate. They were indeed valuable qualities in the hands of a Chinaman, deft as he was of execution, fertile of design, fanciful though not imaginative, in short, a born maker of pretty toys: but such daintinesses were of little avail to a good workman of our race; eager, impatient, imaginative, with something of melancholy or moroseness even in his sport, his very jokes two-edged and fierce, he had other work to do, if his employers but knew it, than the making of toys. Well, but in the time we have before us the workman was but thought of as a convenient machine,

and this machine, driven by the haphazard whims of the time, produced at Meissen, at Sèvres, at Chelsea, at Derby, and in Staffordshire, a most woeful set of works of art, of which perhaps those of Sèvres were the most repulsively hideous, those of Meissen (at their worst) the most barbarous, and those made in England the stupidest, though it may be the least ugly.

Now this is very briefly the history of the art of pottery down to our own times, when styleless anarchy prevails; a state of things not so hopeless as in the last century, because it shows a certain uneasiness as to whether we are right or wrong, which may be a sign of life. Meanwhile, as to matters of art, the craft which turns out such tons of commercial wares, every piece of which ought to be a work of art, produces almost literally nothing. On this dismal side of things I will not dwell, but will ask you to consider with me what can be done to remedy it; a question which I know exercises much many excellent and public-spirited men who are at the head of pottery works. Well, in the first place, it is clear that the initiative cannot be wholly taken by these men; we, all of us I mean who care about the arts, must help them by asking for the right thing, and making them quite clear what it is we ask for. To my mind it should be something like this, which is but another way of putting those principles of the art which I spoke of before. First. No vessel should be fashioned by being pressed into a mould that can be made by throwing on the wheel, or otherwise by hand. Second. All vessels should be finished on the wheel, not turned in a lathe, as is now the custom. How can you expect to have good workmen when they know that whatever surface their hands may put on the work will be taken off by a machine? Third. It follows, as a corollary to the last point, that we must not demand excessive neatness in pottery, and this more especially in cheap wares. Workmanlike finish is necessary, but finish to be workmanlike must always be in proportion to the kind of work. What we get in pottery at present is mechanical finish, not workmanlike, and is as easy

to do as the other is hard: one is a matter of a manager's system, the other comes of constant thought and trouble on the part of the men, who by that time are artists, as we call them. Fourth. As to the surface decoration on pottery, it is clear it must never be printed; for the rest, it would take more than an hour to go even very briefly into the matter of painting on pottery; but one rule we have for a guide, and whatever we do if we abide by it, we are quite sure to go wrong if we reject it: and it is common to all the lesser arts. Think of your material. Don't paint anything on pottery save what can be painted only on pottery; if you do, it is clear that, however good a draughtsman you may be, you do not care about that special art. You can't suppose that the Greek wall-painting was anything like their painting on pottery; there is plenty of evidence to show that it was not. Or take another example from the Persian art; it is easy for those conversant with it to tell from an outline tracing of a design whether it was done for pottery-painting or for other work. Fifth. Finally, when you have asked for these qualities from the potters, and even in a very friendly way boycotted them a little till you get them, you will of course be prepared to pay a great deal more for your pottery than you do now, even for the rough work you may have to take. I'm sure that won't hurt you; we shall only have less and break less, and our incomes will still be the same.

Now as to the kindred art of making glass vessels. It is on much the same footing as the potter's craft. Never till our own day has an ugly or stupid glass vessel been made; and no wonder, considering the capabilities of the art. In the hands of a good workman the metal is positively alive, and is, you may say, coaxing him to make something pretty. Nothing but commercial enterprise capturing an unlucky man and setting him down in the glassmaker's chair with his pattern beside him (which I should think must generally have been originally designed by a landscape gardener): nothing but this kind of thing could turn out ugly glasses. This stupidity will never be set right till we give up demand-

ing accurately-gauged glasses made by the gross. I am fully in earnest when I say that if I were setting about getting good glasses made, I would get some good workmen together, tell them the height and capacity of the vessels I wanted, and perhaps some general idea as to kind of shape, and then let them do their best. Then I would sort them out as they came from the annealing arches (what a pleasure that would be!) and I would put a good price on the best ones, for they would be worth it; and I don't believe that the worst would be bad.

In speaking of glass-work, it is a matter of course that I am only thinking of that which is blown and worked by hand; moulded and cut glass may have commercial, but cannot have artistic value. As to the material of the glass vessels, that is a very important point. Modern managers have worked very hard to get their glass colourless: it does not seem to me that they have quite succeeded. I should say that their glass was cold and bluish in colour; but whether or not, their aim was wrong. A slight tint is an advantage in the metal; so are slight specks and streaks, for these things make the form visible. The modern managers of glassworks have taken enormous pains to get rid of all colour in their glass; to get it so that when worked into a vessel it shall not show any slightest speck or streak; in fact, they have toiled to take all character out of the metal, and have succeeded; and this in spite of the universal admiration for the Venice glass of the seventeenth century, which is both specked and streaky, and has visible colour in it. This glass of Venice or Murano is most delicate in its form, and was certainly meant quite as much for ornament as use; so you may be sure that if the makers of it had seen any necessity for getting more mechanical perfection in their metal they would have tried for it and got it; but like all true artists they were contented when they had a material that served the purpose of their special craft, and would not weary themselves in seeking after what they did not want. And I feel sure that if they had been making glass for or-

dinary table use at a low price, and which ran more risks of breakage, as they would have had to fashion their vessels thicker and less daintily they would have been contented with a rougher metal than that which they used. Such a manufacture yet remains to be set on foot, and I very much wish it could be done; only it must be a manufacture; must be done by hand, and not by machine, human or otherwise.

So much, and very briefly, of these two important Lesser Arts, which it must be admitted are useful, even to Diogenes, since the introduction of tea: I have myself at a pinch tried a tin mug for tea, and found it altogether inconvenient, and a horn I found worse still; so, since we must have pottery and glass, and since it is only by an exertion of the cultivated intellect that they can be made ugly, I must needs wish that we might take a little less trouble in that direction: at the same time I quite understand that in this case both the goods would cost the consumers more, even much more, and that the capitalists who risk their money in keeping the manufactories of the goods going would make less money; both which things to my mind would be fruitful in benefits to the community.

The next craft I have to speak of is that of Weaving: not so much of an art as pottery and glass-making, because so much of it must be mechanical, engaged in the making of mere plain cloth; of which side of it all one need say is that we should have as little plain cloth made as we conveniently can, and for that reason should insist on having it made well and solidly, and of good materials; the other side of it, that which deals with figure-weaving, must be subdivided into figure-weaving which is carried out mechanically, and figure-weaving which is altogether a handicraft.

As to the first of these, its interest is limited by the fact that it is mechanical; since the manner of doing it has with some few exceptions varied little for many hundred years: such trivial alterations as the lifting the warp-threads by means of the Jacquard machine, or throwing the shuttle by steam-power, ought not to make much difference in the art

of it, though I cannot say that they have not done so. On the other hand, though mechanical, it produces beautiful things, which an artist cannot disregard, and man's ingenuity and love of beauty may be made obvious enough in it; neither do I call the figure-weaver's craft a dull one, if he be set to do things which are worth doing: to watch the web growing day by day almost magically, in anticipation of the time when it is to be taken out and one can see it on the right side in all its well-schemed beauty; to make something beautiful that will last, out of a few threads of silken wool, seems to me a not unpleasant way of earning one's livelihood so long only as one lives and works in a pleasant place, with the workday not too long, and a book or two to be got at.

However, since this is admittedly a mechanical craft, I have not much to say of it, for it is not my business this evening to speak of the designs for its fashioning; this much one may say, that as the designing of woven stuffs fell into degradation in the latter days, the designers got fidgeting after trivial novelties, change for the sake of change; they must needs strive to make their woven flowers look as if they were painted with a brush, or even sometimes as if they were drawn by the engraver's burin. This gave them plenty of trouble, and exercised their ingenuity in the tormenting of their web with spots and stripes and ribs and the rest of it, but quite destroyed the seriousness of the work, and even its *raison d'être*. As of pottery-painting, so of figure-weaving: do nothing in it but that which only weaving can do, and to this end make your design as elaborate as you please in silhouette, but carry it out simply; you are not drawing lines freely with your shuttle, you are building up a pattern with a fine rectilinear mosaic. If this is kept well in mind by the designer, and he does not try to force his material into no-thoroughfares, he may have abundant pleasure in the making of woven stuffs, and he is perhaps less likely to go wrong (if he has a feeling for colour) in this art than in any other. I will say further that he should be careful to get due proportion between his warp and weft: not to starve the first, which is the

body of the web so to say, for the sake of the second, which is its clothes; this is done nowadays over much by ingenious designers who are trying to make their web look like non-mechanical stuffs, or who want to get a delusive show of solidity in a poor cloth, which is much to be avoided. A similar fault we are too likely to fall into is of a piece with what is done in all the lesser arts to-day, and which doubtless is much fostered by the ease given to our managers of works by the over-development of machinery: I am thinking of the weaving up of rubbish into apparently delicate and dainty wares. No man with the true instinct of a workman should have anything to do with this: it may not mean commercial dishonesty, though I suspect it sometimes does, but it must mean artistic dishonesty: poor materials in this craft, as in all others, should only be used in coarse work, where they are used without pretence for what they are: this we must agree to at once, or sink all art in commerce (so called) in these crafts.

So much for mechanical figure-weaving. Its *raison d'être* is that it gives scope to the application of imagination and beauty to any cloth, thick or thin, close or open, costly or cheap. In some way or other you may weave any of these into figures; but when we may limit ourselves to certain heavy, close, and very costly cloths, we no longer need the help of anything that can fairly be called a machine: little more is needed than a frame which will support heavy beams on which we may strain our warp; our work is purely hand-work, we may do what we will according to the fineness of our warp. These are the conditions of carpet and tapestry weaving, meaning by carpets the real thing, such as the East has furnished us with from time immemorial, and not the makeshift imitation woven by means of the Jacquard loom, or otherwise mechanically.

As to the art of carpet-weaving, then, one must say that historically it belongs to the East. I do not think it has been proved that any piled carpets were made in Europe during the Middle Ages proper, though some writers have thought

that a fabric, called in edicts of the fourteenth century *tapisserie sarracenoise*, was in fact piled carpet-work: however, in the seventeenth century they certainly were being made to a certain extent even in these islands: amongst other examples I have seen some pieces of carpet-work in a Jacobean house in Oxfordshire, which an inventory of about 1620 calls, oddly enough, Irish stitch. But wherever the history of the art may begin among ourselves, I fear it may almost be said to end with the seventeenth century; there are still a few places where hand-wrought carpets are made, but scarcely anything original is done; coarsely copied imitations of the Levantine carpets, and a sort of deduction from the degraded follies of the time of Louis the Fifteenth, traditionally thought to be suitable for the dreary waste of an aristocratic country-house, are nearly all that is turned out at present. Still I do not agree with an opinion which I have heard expressed, that carpets can only be made in the East: such carpets as have been made there for the last hundred years or so, which are chiefly pieces of nearly formless colour, could not be made satisfactorily and spontaneously by Western art; but these carpets, delightful as they are, are themselves the product of a failing art: their prototypes are partly those simple but scientifically designed cloths whose patterns are founded on the elaborate pavement mosaics of Byzantine art; and partly they are degradations, traceable by close study, from the elaborate floral art of Persia. The originals of the first kind may be seen accurately figured in many of the pictures of the palmy days of Italian and Flemish art, and, as I have said, they are designed on scientific principles which any good designer can apply to works of our own day without burdening his conscience with the charge of plagiarism. As to the other kind of the Persian floral designs, there are still a few of these in existence, though, as I have never seen any of them figured in old pictures, I doubt if they found their way to Europe much in the Middle Ages. These, beautiful as they are in colour, are as far as possible

from lacking form in design; they are fertile of imagination, and lovely in drawing; and though imitation of them would carry with it its usual disastrous consequences, they show us the way to set about designing such-like things, and that a carpet can be made which by no means depends for its success on the mere instinct for colour, which is the last gift of art to leave certain races. Withal, one thing seems certain, that if we don't set to work making our own carpets it will not be long before we shall find the East fail us: for that last gift, the gift of the sense of harmonious colour, is speedily dying out in the East before the conquests of European rifles and money-bags.

As to the other manufacture of unmechanically woven cloth, the art of tapestry-weaving, it was, while it flourished, not only an art of Europe, but even of Northern Europe. Still more than carpet-weaving, it must be spoken of in the past tense. If you are curious on the subject of its technique you may see that going on as in its earlier, or let us say real, life at the Gobelins at Paris; but it is a melancholy sight: the workmen are as handy at it as only Frenchmen can be at such work, and their skill is traditional too, I have heard; for they are the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of tapestry-weavers. Well, their ingenuity is put to the greatest pains for the least results: it would be a mild word to say that what they make is worthless; it is more than that; it has a corrupting and deadening influence upon all the Lesser Arts of France, since it is always put forward as the very standard and crown of all that those arts can do at the best: a more idiotic waste of human labour and skill it is impossible to conceive. There is another branch of the same stupidity, differing slightly in technique, at Beauvais; and the little town of Aubusson in mid-France has a decaying commercial industry of the like rubbish. I am sorry to have to say that an attempt to set the art going which has been made, doubtless with the best intentions, under Royal patronage at Windsor, within the last few years, has most unluckily gone on the lines of

the work at the Gobelins, and, if it does not change its system utterly, is doomed to artistic failure, whatever its commercial success may be.

Well, this is all I have to say about the poor remains of the art of tapestry-weaving: and yet what a noble art it was once! To turn our chamber walls into the green woods of the leafy month of June, populous of bird and beast; or a summer garden with man and maid playing round a fountain, or a solemn procession of the mythical warriors and heroes of old; that surely was worth the trouble of doing, and the money that had to be paid for it: that was no languid acquiescence in an upholsterer's fashion. How well I remember as a boy my first acquaintance with a room hung with faded greenery at Queen Elizabeth's Lodge, by Chingford Hatch, in Epping Forest (I wonder what has become of it now), and the impression of romance that it made upon me; a feeling that always comes back on me when I read, as I often do, Sir Walter Scott's Antiquary, and come to the description of the green room at Monkbarns, amongst which the novelist has with such exquisite cunning of art imbedded the fresh and glittering verses of the summer poet Chaucer; yes, that was more than upholstery, believe me.

Nor must you forget that when the art was at its best, while on the one side it was almost a domestic art, and all sorts of naïve fancies were embodied in it, it took the place in Northern Europe of the fresco painting of Italy; among the existing easel pictures of the Flemish school of the fifteenth century there are no designs which are equal in conception and breadth of treatment to those which were worked out in tapestry, and I believe that some of the very best Northern artists spent the greater part of their time in designing for this art. Roger van der Weyden of the Cologne school is named as having done much in this way: under the gallery of the great hall at Hampton Court hangs a piece which I suppose is by him, and which at any rate is, taking it altogether, the finest piece I have seen. There is quite a school of tapestry in the place, by the way; the withdrawing-

room or solar at the end of the hall is hung with tapestries but little inferior to the first mentioned, and perhaps a little later, but unluckily, unlike it, much obscured by the dirt of centuries (they are not faded, only dirty), while the main walls of the great hall itself are hung with work of a later date, say about 1580. You may test your taste by comparing these later works (very fine of their kind) with the earlier, and seeing which you like best. I will not try to influence you on this matter, but will only say that the borders of this later tapestry are admirably skilful pieces of execution.

Perhaps you will think I have said too much about an art that has practically perished; but as there is nothing whatever to prevent us from reviving it if we please, since the technique of it is easy to the last degree, so also it seems to me that in the better days of art the exaltation of certain parts of a craft into the region of the higher arts was both a necessary consequence of the excellence of the craft as a whole, and in return kept up that excellence to its due pitch by example. The magnificent woven pictures of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the natural result of the pleasure and skill that were exercised in the art of weaving in every village and homestead, at the same time that they were an encouragement to the humbler brother of the craft to persevere in doing his best.

I have now to speak of a craft which I daresay some of you will think a lesser art indeed, but which nevertheless we cannot help considering if we are to trouble ourselves at all about the art of weaving. This is the dyer's craft: of which I must say that no craft has been so oppressed by the philistinism of false commerce, or by the ignorance of the public as to their real wants; which oppression is of very late date, and belongs almost wholly to our own days. I should very much like to be able to tell you the whole story of this ancient craft, but time fails me to give you more than the very barest outline of it. The ancient Egyptians knew well the niceties of the art. I myself have dyed wool red by the selfsame process that the Mosaic dyers used; and from the remotest

times the whole art was thoroughly understood in India. If to-day I want for my own use some of the red dye above alluded to, I must send to Argolis or Acarnania for it; and Pliny would have been quite at home in the dye-house of Tintoretto's father or master. No change at all befell the art either in the East or the North till after the discovery of America; this gave the dyers one new material in itself good, and one that was doubtful or bad. The good one was the new insect dye, cochineal, which at first was used only for dyeing crimson or bluish red, and for this use cast into the shade the older red insect dye above alluded to, called by the classical peoples coccus, and by the Arabs Al-kermes. The bad new material was log-wood, so fugitive a dye as to be quite worthless as a colour by itself (as it was at first used), and to my mind of very little use otherwise. No other new dye-stuff of importance was found in America, although the discoverers came across such abundance of red-dyeing wood growing there that a huge country of South America has thence taken its name of Brazil. The next change happened about 1630, when a German discovered accidentally how to dye scarlet with cochineal on a tin basis, thereby putting the old dye, kermes, almost wholly out of commerce. Next, in the last years of the eighteenth century, a worthless blue was invented (which I don't name to avoid confusion in this brief sketch). About the same time a rather valuable yellow dye (quercitron bark) was introduced from America. Next, in 1810, chemical science, which by this time had got fairly on its legs, began to busy itself about the dyer's craft, and discovered how to dye with Prussian blue, a colour which, as a pigment, had been discovered about eighty years before. This discovery was rather harmful than otherwise to my mind, but was certainly an important one, since before that time there was but one dyeing drug that could give a blue colour capable of standing even a week of diffused daylight, indigo to wit, whether it was produced from tropical or sub-tropical plants, or from our Northern plant, woad.

Now these novelties, the sum of which amounts to very

little, are all that make any difference between the practice of dyeing under Rameses the Great and under Queen Victoria, till about twenty years ago; about that time a series of the most wonderful discoveries were made by the chemists; discoveries which did the utmost credit to their skill, patience, and capacity for scientific research, and which, from a so-called commercial point of view, have been of the greatest importance; for they have, as the phrase goes, revolutionized the art of dyeing. The dye-stuffs discovered by the indefatigable genius of scientific chemists, which every one has heard of under the name of aniline colours, and which are the product of coal-tar, are brighter and stronger in colour than the old dyes, cheaper (much cheaper) in price, and, which is of course of the last importance to the dyer, infinitely easier to use. No wonder, therefore, that they have almost altogether supplanted the older dyes, except in a few cases: surely the invention seems a splendid one!

Well, it is only marred by one fact, that being an invention for the benefit of an art whose very existence depends upon its producing beauty, it is on the road, and far advanced on it, towards destroying all beauty in the art. The fact is, that every one of these colours is hideous in itself, whereas all the old dyes are in themselves beautiful colours; only extreme perversity could make an ugly colour out of them. Under these circumstances it must, I suppose, be considered a negative virtue in the new dyes that they are as fugitive as the older ones are stable; but even on that head I will ask you to note one thing that condemns them finally, that whereas the old dyes when fading, as all colours will do more or less, simply gradually changed into paler tints of the same colour, and were not unpleasant to look on, the fading of the new dyes is a change into all kinds of abominable and livid hues. I mention this because otherwise it might be thought that a man with an artistic eye for colour might so blend the hideous but bright aniline colours as to produce at least something tolerable; indeed, this is not unfrequently attempted to-day, but with small success, partly from the

reason above mentioned, partly because the hues so produced by "messing about," as I should call it, have none of the quality or the character which the simpler drug gives naturally: all artists will understand what I mean by this. In short, this is what it comes to, that it would be better for us, if we cannot revive the now almost lost art of dyeing, to content ourselves with weaving our cloths of the natural colour of the fibre, or to buy them coloured by less civilized people than ourselves.

Now, really, even if you think the art of dyeing as contemptible as Pliny did, you must admit that this is a curious state of things, and worth while considering, even by a philosopher. It is most true that the chemists of our day have made discoveries almost past belief for their wonder; they have given us a set of colours which has made a new thing of the dyer's craft; commercial enterprise has eagerly seized on the gift, and yet, unless all art is to disappear from our woven stuffs, we must turn round and utterly and simply reject it. We must relegate these new dyes to a museum of scientific curiosities, and for our practice go back, if not to the days of the Pharaohs, yet at least to those of Tintoret. I say I invite you to consider this, because it is a type of the oppression under which the lesser arts are suffering at the present day.

The art of dyeing leads me naturally to the humble but useful art of printing on cloth: really a very ancient art, since it is not essential to it that the pattern should be printed; it may be painted by hand. Now, the painting of cloth with real dyes was practised from the very earliest days in India; and, since the Egyptians of Pliny's time knew the art well, it is most probable that in that little-changing land it was very old also. Indeed many of the minute and elaborate patterns on the dresses of Egyptian imagery impress me strongly as representing what would naturally be the work of dye-painted linen. As to the craft among ourselves, it has, as a matter of course, suffered grievously from the degradation of dyeing, and this not only from the worsening of the tints

both in beauty and durability, but from a more intricate cause. I have said that the older dyes were much more difficult to use than the modern ones. The processes for getting a many-coloured pattern on to a piece of cotton, even so short a while back as when I was a boy, were many and difficult. As a rule, this is done in fewer hours now than it was in days then. You may think this a desirable change, but, except on the score of cheapness, I can't agree with you. The natural and healthy difficulties of the old processes, all connected as they were with the endeavour to make the colour stable, drove any designer who had anything in him to making his pattern peculiarly suitable to the whole art, and gave a character to it, that character which you so easily recognize in Indian palampores, or in the faded curtains of our grandmothers' time, which still, in spite of many a summer's sun and many and many a strenuous washing, retain at least their reds and blues. In spite of the rudeness or the extravagance of these things, we are always attracted towards them, and the chief reason is, that we feel at once that there is something about the designs natural to the craft, that they can be done only by the practice of it, a quality which, I must once more repeat, is a necessity for all the designs of the lesser arts. But in the comparatively easy way in which these cloths are printed to-day, there are no special difficulties to stimulate the designer to invention; he can get any design done on his cloth; the printer will make no objections, so long as the pattern is the right size for his roller, and has only the due number of colours. The result of all this is ornament on the cotton, which might just as well have been printed or drawn on paper, and in spite of any grace or cleverness in the design, it is found to look poor and tame and wiry. That you will see clearly enough when some one has had a fancy to imitate some of the generous and fertile patterns that were once specially designed for the older cloths. It all comes to nothing; it is dull, hard, unsympathetic. No; there is nothing for it but the trouble and the simplicity of the earlier craft, if you are to have any beauty in cloth-

printing at all. And if not, why should we trouble to have a pattern of any sort on our cotton cloths? I for one am dead against it, unless the pattern is really beautiful; it is so very worthless if it is not.

As I have been speaking about printing on cotton cloths, I suppose I am bound to say something also on the quite modern and very humble, but, as things go, useful art of printing patterns on paper for wall-hangings. But really there is not much to be said about it, unless we were considering the arrangement and formation of its patterns; because it is so very free from those difficulties the meeting and conquering of which give character to the more intricate crafts. I think the real way to deal successfully with designing for paper-hangings is to accept their mechanical nature frankly, to avoid falling into the trap of trying to make your paper look as if it were painted by hand. Here is the place, if anywhere, for dots and lines and hatchings: mechanical enrichment is of the first necessity in it. After that you may be as intricate and elaborate in your pattern as you please; nay, the more and the more mysteriously you interweave your sprays and stems the better for your purpose, as the whole thing has to be pasted flat on a wall, and the cost of all this intricacy will but come out of your own brain and hand. For the rest, the fact that in this art we are so little helped by beautiful and varying material imposes on us the necessity for being specially thoughtful in our designs; every one of them must have a distinct idea in it; some beautiful piece of nature must have pressed itself on our notice so forcibly that we are quite full of it, and can, by submitting ourselves to the rules of art, express our pleasure to others, and give them some of the keen delight that we ourselves have felt. If we cannot do this in some measure our paper-design will not be worth much; it will be but a makeshift expedient for covering a wall with something or other; and if we really care about art we shall not put up with something or other, but shall choose honest whitewash instead, on which sun and shadow play so pleasantly, if only our room be well

planned and well shaped, and look kindly on us. A great If, indeed; which lands me at once into my next division of the lesser arts, which for want of a better word I will call house-furnishing: I say it lands me there, because if only our houses were built as they should be, we should want such a little furniture, and be so happy in that scantiness. Even as it is, we should at all events take as our maxim the less the better: excess of furniture destroys the repose of a lazy man, and is in the way of an industrious one; and besides, if we really care for art we shall always feel inclined to save on superfluities, that we may have a wherewithal to spend on works of art.

Simplicity is the one thing needful in furnishing, of that I am certain; I mean first as to quantity, and secondly as to kind and manner of design. The arrangement of our houses ought surely to express the kind of life we lead, or desire to lead; and to my mind, if there is anything to be said in favour of that to-day somewhat well-abused English middle class, it is that, amidst all the narrowness that is more or less justly charged against it, it has a kind of orderly intelligence which is not without some value. Such as it is, such its houses ought to be if it takes any pains about them, as I think it should: they should look like part of the life of decent citizens prepared to give good commonplace reasons for what they do. For us to set to work to imitate the minor vices of the Borgias, or the degraded and nightmare whims of the *blasé* and bankrupt French aristocracy of Louis the Fifteenth's time, seems to me merely ridiculous. So I say our furniture should be good citizen's furniture, solid and well made in workmanship, and in design should have nothing about it that is not easily defensible, no monstrosities or extravagances, not even of beauty, lest we weary of it. As to matters of construction, it should not have to depend on the special skill of a very picked workman, or the super-excellence of his glue, but be made on the proper principles of the art of joinery: also I think that, except for very movable things like chairs, it should not be so very light as to be

nearly imponderable; it should be made of timber rather than walking-sticks. Moreover, I must needs think of furniture as of two kinds: one part of it being chairs, dining and working tables, and the like, the necessary work-a-day furniture in short, which should be of course both well made and well proportioned, but simple to the last degree; nay, if it were rough I should like it the better, not the worse; with work-a-day furniture like this we should among other blessings avoid the terror which now too often goes with the tolerably regularly recurring accidents of the week.

But besides this kind of furniture, there is the other kind of what I should call state-furniture, which I think is proper even for a citizen; I mean sideboards, cabinets, and the like, which we have quite as much for beauty's sake as for use; we need not spare ornament on these, but may make them as elegant and elaborate as we can with carving, inlaying, or painting; these are the blossoms of the art of furniture, as picture tapestry is of the art of weaving: but these also should not be scattered about the house at haphazard, but should be used architecturally to dignify important chambers and important places in them. And once more, whatever you have in your rooms think first of the walls, for they are that which makes your house and home; and if you don't make some sacrifice in their favour, you will find your chambers have a kind of makeshift, lodging-house look about them, however rich and handsome your movables may be.

The last of the Lesser Arts I have to speak of I come to with some trepidation; but it is so important to one half of the race of civilized mankind, the male half, that I will venture. Indeed I speak of the art of dress with the more terror because civilization has settled for us males that art shall have no place in our clothes, and that we must in this matter occupy the unamiable position of critics of our betters. Rebel as I am, I bow to that decision, though I find it difficult to admit that a chimney-pot hat or a tail-coat is the embodiment of wisdom in clothes-philosophy; and sometimes in

my more sceptical moments I puzzle myself in thinking why, when I am indoors, I should wear two coats, one with a back and no front, and the other with a front and no back. However, I have not near enough courage even to suggest a rebellion against these stern sartorial laws; and after all one can slip into and out of the queer things with great ease, and that being the case, it is far more important to me what other people wear than what I wear: so that I ask leave to be an irresponsible critic for a few moments.

Now I have lived through at least two periods of feminine dress, without counting the present one, which I perceive with some terror is trembling on the verge of change: yes, with terror, because for a good many years past, in spite of a few extravagances, the dress of ladies in England has been highly satisfactory, and very consolatory for the mishaps that have befallen the lesser arts otherwise. Under these circumstances, both for the sake of the hope and the warning that may lie in it, I will venture to call to your memory what has befallen the art of dress in modern times.

The days of Louis the Fifteenth draw across our path a kind of enchanted wood of abominations into which we need not venture: out of those horrors costume escaped into a style that was really graceful and simple in the years that came just before the French Revolution. What this costume really was you can see as clearly as anywhere in the engravings designed by the quaint and fertile book-illustrator, the Pole Chodowiecki, whose works were much imitated by our Stothard. Then came a period when dress was influenced by the affectation of imitating the art and manners of the classical times, which produced under the First Napoleon a costume characterized by somewhat of an exaggeration of slim gracefulness amongst other extravagances; for which affectations a dire revenge was lying in wait, the result of which, after a doubtful time between the dates of the Battle of Waterloo and the accession of Queen Victoria, was a style which one may call that of grim modern respectability: into the middle of that period I was born, and well I remember

its horrors. If you can get at an "Illustrated London News" of about the time of the Queen's visit to Louis Philippe, look at the costumes in it; they will give you cause for serious reflection: or for an earlier example (I think) take up your "Oliver Twist," with George Cruikshank's illustrations, and contemplate the effigy there figured of that insipid person Miss Rose Maylie.*

Well, that was the first period I have seen; on this period gradually crept another, which, at its height at least, could not be accused of over-much love of respectability: this period was that of crinoline. The woodcuts of John Leech give you admirable illustrations of all the stages of this period. It conquered something from its predecessor in that on the whole it allowed women to arrange their hair naturally and gracefully; but in everything else mere blatant vulgarity was apparently what it aimed at. I have good hopes that one may say that the degradation of costume reached its lowest depth in this costume of the Second Empire.† This is the second period of costume that I have seen, and its end brings us to the beginning of things as they are; when woman's dress is or may be on the whole graceful and sensible (please note that I say it may be); for the most hopeful sign of the present period is its freedom: in the two previous periods there was no freedom. In that of grim respectability a lady was positively under well-understood penalties not allowed to dress gracefully, she could not do it; under the reign of crinoline, if she had dressed simply and beautifully, like a lady, in short, she would have been hooted in the streets; but nowadays, and for years past, a lady may dress quite simply and beautifully, and yet not be noticed as having anything peculiar or theatrical in her costume. Extravagances of fashion have not been lacking to us,

*I do not mean any disrespect to Dickens, of whom I am a humble worshipper.

†Indeed I hope so; but since this Lecture was delivered, unhappy tokens are multiplying that fine ladies are determined to try whether ugliness may not be more attractive than beauty.

but no one has been compelled to adopt them; every one might dress herself in the way which her own good sense told her suited her best. Now this, ladies, is the first and greatest necessity of rational and beautiful costume, that you should keep your liberty of choice; so I beg you to battle stoutly for it, or we shall all tumble into exploded follies again. Then next, your only chance of keeping that liberty is, to resist the imposition on costume of unnatural monstrosities. Garments should veil the human form, and neither caricature it, nor obliterate its lines: the body should be draped, and neither sewn up in a sack, nor stuck in the middle of a box: drapery, properly managed, is not a dead thing, but a living one, expressive of the endless beauty of motion; and if this be lost, half the pleasure of the eyes in common life is lost. You must specially bear this in mind, because the fashionable milliner has chiefly one end in view, how to hide and degrade the human body in the most expensive manner. She or he would see no beauty in the Venus of Milo; she or he looks upon you as scaffolds on which to hang a bundle of cheap rags, which can be sold dear under the name of a dress. Now, ladies, if you do not resist this to the bitter end, costume is ruined again, and all we males are rendered inexpressibly unhappy. So I beg of you fervently, do not allow yourselves to be upholstered like armchairs, but drape yourselves like women. Lastly, and this is really part of the same counsel, resist change for the sake of change; this is the very bane of all the arts. I say resist this stupidity, and the care of dress, duly subordinated to other duties, is a serious duty to you; but if you do not resist it, the care of dress becomes a frivolous waste of time. It follows, from the admission of this advice, that you should insist on having materials for your dresses that are excellent of their kind, and beautiful of their kind, and that when you have a dress of even moderately costly materials you won't be in a hurry to see the end of it. This is a thing too which will help us weavers, body and soul, and in a due and natural way: not like the too good-natured way of my Lady Bective, who

wants you to wear stiff alpaca, so that the Bradford capitalists may not have to change their machinery. I can't agree to that; if they will weave ugly cloth let them take the consequences.

But one good thing breeds another; and most assuredly a steadiness in fashion, when a good fashion has been attained, and a love of beautiful things for their own sakes and not because they are novelties, is both human, reasonable, and civilized, and will help the maker of wares, both master and man, and give them also time to think of beautiful things, and thus to raise their lives to a higher level.

Thus I have named a certain number of the lesser arts, which I must ask you to take as representing the whole mass of them. Now all these arts, since they at all events make a show of life, one may suppose civilization considers desirable, if not necessary; but if they are to go on existing and to occupy in one way or other the lives of millions of men, it seems to me that their life should be real, that the necessity for them should be felt by those that allow them to be carried on; for surely wasted labour is a heavy burden for the world to bear.

I have said that, on the other hand, I am ready to accept the conclusion that these arts are vain and should not be carried on at all; that we should do nothing that we can help doing beyond what is barely necessary to keep ourselves alive, that we may contemplate the mystery of life, and be ready to accept the mystery of death. Yes, that might be agreed to, if the world would; but, you see, it will not: man's life is too complex, too unmanageable at the hands of any unit of the race for such a conclusion to be come to except by a very few, better, or it may be worse, than their fellows; and even they will be driven to it by noting the contrast between their aspirations and the busy and inconsistent lives of other men. I mean, if most men lived reasonably, and with justice to their fellows, no men would be drawn towards asceticism. No, the lesser arts of life must be practised, that is clear.

It only remains therefore for us to determine whether they shall but minister to our material needs, receiving no help and no stimulus from the cravings of our souls, or whether they shall really form part of our lives material and spiritual, and be so helpful and natural, that even the sternest philosopher may look upon them kindly and feel helped by them.

Is it possible that civilization can determine to brutalize the crafts of life by cutting them off from the intellectual part of us? Surely not in the long run; and yet I know that the progress of the race from barbarism to civilization has hitherto had a tendency to make our lives more and more complex; to make us more dependent one upon the other, and to destroy individuality, which is the breath of life to art. But swiftly and without check as this tendency has grown, I know I cannot be alone in doubting if it has been an unmixed good to us, or in believing that a change will come, perhaps after some great disaster has chilled us into pausing, and so given us time for reflection: anyhow, in some way or other, I believe the day is not so far distant when the best of men will set to work trying to simplify life on a new basis; when the organization of labour will mean something else than the struggle of the strong to use each one to his best advantage the necessities and miseries of the weak.

Meanwhile I believe that it will speed the coming of that day if we do but look at art open-eyed and with all sincerity; I want an end of believing that we believe in art-bogies; I want the democracy of the arts established: I want every one to think for himself about them, and not to take things for granted from hearsay; every man to do what he thinks right, not in anarchical fashion, but feeling that he is responsible to his fellows for what he feels, thinks, and has determined. In these lesser arts every one should say: I have such or such an ornamental matter, not because I am told to like it, but because I like it myself, and I will have nothing that I don't like, nothing; and I can give you my reasons for rejecting this, and accepting that, and am ready

to abide by them, and to take the consequences of my being right or wrong. Of course such independence must spring from knowledge, not from ignorance, and you may be sure that this kind of independence would be far from destroying the respect due to the higher intellects that busy themselves with the arts. On the contrary, it would make that respect the stronger, since those who had themselves got to think seriously about the arts would understand the better what difficulties beset the greatest men in their struggles to express what is in them. Anyhow, if this intelligent, sympathetic, and serious independence of thought about the arts does not become general among cultivated men (and all men ought to be cultivated), it is a matter of course that the practice of the arts must fall into the hands of a degraded and despised class, degraded and despised at least as far as its daily work goes—that is to say, the greater part of its waking hours.

Surely this is a serious danger to our political and social advancement, to our cultivation, to our civilization in short; surely we can none of us be content to accept the responsibility of creating such a class of pariahs, or to sit quiet under the burden of its existence, if it exist at present, as indeed it does. Therefore I ask you to apply the remedy of refusing to be ignorant and nose-led about the arts; I ask you to learn what you want and to ask for it; in which case you will both get it and will breed intelligent and worthy citizens for the common weal; defenders of society, friends for yourselves.

Is not this worth doing? It will add to the troubles of life? Maybe; I will not say nay. Yet consider after all that the life of a man is more troublous than that of a swine, and the life of a freeman than the life of a slave; and take your choice accordingly. Moreover, if I am right in these matters, your trouble will be shifted, not increased: we shall take pains indeed concerning things which we care about, hard and bitter pains, maybe, yet with an end in view; but the confused, aimless, and for ever unrewarded pains which we

now so plentifully take about things we do not care about, we shall sweep all that away, and so shall win calmer rest and more strenuous, less entangled work.

What other blessings are there in life save these two, fearless rest and hopeful work? Troublous as life is, it has surely given to each one of us here some times and seasons when, surrounded by simple and beautiful things, we have really felt at rest; when the earth and all its plenteous growth, and the tokens of the varied life of men, and the very sky and waste of air above us, have seemed all to conspire together to make us calm and happy, not slothful but restful. Still oftener belike it has given us those other times, when at last, after many a struggle with incongruous hindrances, our own chosen work has lain before us disentangled from all encumbrances and unrealities, and we have felt that nothing could withhold us, not even ourselves, from doing the work we were born to do, and that we were men and worthy of life. Such rest, and such work, I earnestly wish for myself and for you, and for all men: to have space and freedom to gain such rest and such work is the end of politics; to learn how best to gain it is the end of education; to learn its inmost meaning is the end of religion.

TEXTILE FABRICS. A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EXHIBITION, JULY 1884.

THE subject I have to speak on is a sufficiently wide one, and I can do little more than hint at points of interest in it for your further thought and consideration; all the more as I think I shall be right in supposing that, except for anyone actually engaged in the manufacture of textiles who may be present, you, in common with most educated people at the present day, have very little idea as to how a piece of cloth is made, and not much as to the characteristic differences between the manufactures of diverse periods. However, one limitation to my subject I will at once state: I am going to treat it as an artist and archæologist, not as a manufacturer, as we call it; that is, I shall be considering the wares in question from the point of view of their usefulness (using the word in its widest sense) to the consumer, and not as marketable articles, as subject-matter for exchange. I must assume that the goods I am speaking of were made primarily for use, and only secondarily for sale; that, you see, will limit me to a historical discourse on textile fabrics, since at present those wares, like all other wares of civilized countries, are made primarily for sale, and only secondarily for use.

Now before I begin to speak of the actual history of this important art of weaving, I will run through the various forms of it which it comprises. But first of all it may be necessary to explain three words which I shall be compelled to use: warp, weft, and web; because I have noticed that the writers of leading articles and poetry are sometimes a little vague about the way they use these words. Well, the warp is the set of strained threads, sometimes vertical, sometimes horizontal, on which the work is founded; the weft is the thread which is wafted in and out across this warp, and the woof or web is the product of the two.

As to the kinds of weaving: first there is plain weaving

in its simplest form, where the weft crosses the warp regularly and alternately. Of that I need say no more, because I have to speak mostly of the characteristic ornament of the different periods, and this plain weaving is not susceptible of ornament, woven ornament I mean. To obtain that the weft must cross the warp at regular intervals, but not alternately; on the surface either warp or weft must predominate to make a pattern. To speak broadly, in the most ordinary kind of pattern-weaving the threads come to the surface in a regular and mechanical manner. I have not time to explain all the ways in which this is done, but must ask you to accept that simple statement, and allow me to call this kind common figure-weaving. Sometimes, as a subdivision of this common figure-weaving, the warp comes chiefly to the surface, which makes a satin; and also sometimes these warp threads are caught up over wires with a sharp edge, which are pulled out as the work goes on, leaving a surface with a raised pile, that is velvet. In the next kind of weaving the weft crosses the warp alternately indeed, as in plain unpatterned weaving, but instead of being carried in one stroke all across the web, ends or returns wherever the colour changes, so forming a kind of mosaic of coloured patches; this is tapestry, using the word in its narrowest sense. As a detail of this work I ought to mention that in tapestry-weaving the weft is put in so loosely, driven home so carefully, that the warp is entirely hidden by the weft. That work may be considered as a subdivision of this kind of weaving, where thrums of wool, hair, or silk are knotted into a plain canvas as the work proceeds, so as to form a pile with their cut ends; this is carpet-weaving. Lastly comes a kind of ornamental web, in which the ornament is not produced by weaving, but by painting by hand or printing combined in various ways with dyeing in the piece; we call these printed goods chintzes and so on. Needle-worked embroidery is another way of ornamenting a cloth; but I shall not deal with this form of ornamented cloth.

Now all these manners of weaving have been practised from time immemorial, and are in use to-day, with no more

variation of method than what comes from the application of machinery for lifting up the threads of the warp, as in the Jacquard machine, now universally used in civilized countries, and the use of steam-power for throwing the shuttle. These variations of method are of little or no interest from the artistic point of view, and are only used to get more profit out of the production of the goods; they are incidental changes, and not essential. However, ancient as all these methods are, the oldest way of ornamenting a cloth otherwise than by merely painting on it with a pigment (not dyeing), or by embroidery, must have been the tapestry method, as it requires but a very small amount of technical, though often much artistic, skill. The figured webs of the Homeric poems were probably of this kind of work; in the British Museum there is a scrap of cloth of the ancient Central American civilization so woven; the patterned cloths of the north of Europe before the fourteenth century were mostly tapestries; the South Kensington Museum has a precious fragment of such work of the eleventh or early twelfth century. Among peoples of higher industrial skill, the common figure-weaving took the place of this technically rude work for ordinary recurring patterns, but tapestry was still used for producing what may fairly be called woven pictures; webs whose elaboration and want of repetition of pattern would scarcely allow of any reasonable effect being produced by mere mechanical weaving.

The painting or printing of cloths is doubtless a very ancient practice; I mean to say, the painting them with dyes, not pigments. The minute and elaborate figure ornament which is shown on some of the Egyptian sculpture has, to me, a look of being done by means of this art; it is a confirmation of this probability that Pliny, in a now famous passage, notices the fact that Egypt in his day practised a certain art of figuring cloth, his description of which leaves no doubt that it was what we should now call madder-printing or painting. Of this art I shall have to speak in the notice of dyeing which will conclude this lecture.

So here we have to consider (leaving out plain unornamental weaving) first, common or mechanical weaving, including satin, damask, and velvet; second, tapestry, including carpet-weaving; and third, painting or printing with dyes. Let us consider briefly the practical history of these three arts; and first the mechanical or common weaving. With wares so perishable as woven cloth, it is not wonderful that we have little real record of the stuffs of antiquity; because the descriptions of the poets and writers of the time cannot be depended on for accuracy, as they of course assumed a general knowledge in their audience of the articles described. The vase-painting and sculpture of the central Greek period give us at all events some idea of the quality of the stuffs worn at the period, and in so doing fully confirm the beautiful and simple description of the fine garment in the Odyssey, which is likened to the inner skin of an onion: a figure of speech which, taken with the representations of delicate cloth in the figure-work of the time of Pericles, and earlier and later, gives one an idea of something like those mixed fabrics of silk and cotton which are still made in Greece and Anatolia. Only you must remember that the early classical peoples at least did not know of either silk or cotton, so that flax was probably the material of these fine garments; and we know by the evidence of the Egyptian tombs that linen was woven there of the utmost delicacy and fineness. I don't suppose we need doubt that mechanical pattern-weaving was practised by the Greeks in their earlier and palmy days, but only, I fancy, for the simpler kinds of patterns in piece goods, diapers, and so forth. I conclude the running borders to have been needle-work, or maybe dye-painting. We have a few representations of looms to help us in looking into this matter, which however do not prove much; they are all vertical, and at first sight look nearly like the looms used throughout the Middle Ages, and to-day at the Gobelins, for tapestry-weaving. In one which is figured on a tomb at Beni Hassan in Egypt, the details of an ordinary high-warp tapestry loom are all given accurately; but the weavers seem

Textile Fabrics

to be weaving nothing but plain cloth; in this loom the cloth is being worked downwards, as in the ordinary tapestry loom. In another representation, taken from a Greek vase of about 400 B.C., Penelope is seated before her famous web, which is being worked in an upright loom; there is only one beam to it, the cloth-beam, and the work is woven upward; the warps are kept at the stretch at the bottom by weights looking too small to be effective; the web is figured, has a border of the ordinary subsidiary patterns of classical art, and a stripe of monsters and winged human figures. It seems to have been concluded that this represents actual tapestry-weaving, but too hastily perhaps, as the high-warp loom only means a certain amount of inconvenience in forgoing the mechanical advantages of the spring-staves worked by treadles. Also this Greek loom of 400 B.C. is in all respects like the looms in use in Iceland and the Faroes within the last sixty years for weaving ordinary cloth, plain or chequered.

So much, and little enough, of the loom-work of the early classical period, a time when the merely industrial arts which were, you must remember, mostly carried out by slave-labour, were despised; when private luxury scarcely existed; a fact most happy both for the decency of general life and the glory of the arts. Doubtless the ingenuity of the industrial arts gained much during the later and imperial days of Rome; but there is little direct evidence in the remains, artistic or literary, of the time itself; Pliny, who is very particular on the subject of dyeing, helping us nothing in the matter of weaving. However, perishable as the actual woven wares are, the art is particularly conservative in design, and when we get nearer to our own epoch we have a certain number of specimens preserved to us from the tenth century downward, which not only show us how people wove in those days, but give us more than a hint of the fashions of centuries before their time. A very small fragment of cloth found at Sion, in Switzerland, gives us doubtless a type of a late Roman figured stuff; the pattern, which

repeats in a smallish space, is of a woman seated on a fish-tailed, leopard-headed monster, amongst conventional foliage; the point of it, as an illustration of our history, being that it is designed wholly in the classical manner; so that whatever the date may be, it is absolute evidence, so far as it goes, of the kind of work of the later classical times. Textile Fabrics

However, it is now time for us to leave this somewhat barren desert of vague poetical descriptions, hasty and generalized drawings on vases or tombs, and very rare scraps of the woven goods themselves, and march into the more fruitful country of the early Middle Ages, which give us quite direct evidence of the arts of weaving of the days of the Byzantine Empire. Now you must remember that whatever share the city of New Rome took in actually producing works of the industrial arts under her emperors, she was at least the foster-mother of those arts for all mediæval Europe, and from her came that influence which brought about the new art of Europe, whose origins are obscure enough till they meet and are fused at Constantinople into a style which for centuries after was world-wide; this was natural enough. Looked upon as an European city, Byzantium was for long the only great city of Europe that was really alive and dominant in peace and war; as a mistress or an enemy she dealt with all the great birth-countries of art and letters, nay, of human life. India, Mesopotamia, Syria, Persia, Asia Minor, Egypt; the ideas and arts of all these countries touched her, and mingled with the remains of the older art of Greece, from which the academicism of the long Romano-Greek period had not crushed all the life, sorely as it had weighed upon it. Byzantium then, the Byzantium of Justinian and onwards, we must look upon as the capital of the industrial arts, from the sixth to the thirteenth century, and in none of them was her influence more obvious than in that of weaving. One event alone which took place there revolutionized this art in Europe, the introduction of the silkworm in the sixth century; which event has also made it more possible to judge of what was done in early times, because the material having

the advantage of not being liable to be moth-eaten, some specimens of early date have been left to us.

It would take us too long to discuss the much disputed question of the actual date of these scraps, such as those found in the tomb of Charles the Great at Aix-la-Chapelle; it is enough for us that, as I have said, they undoubtedly represent the design of the stuffs of Justinian's period, and through that period throw light on the fashions of old Rome, and even of classical Athens. These earliest Byzantine or quasi-Byzantine stuffs are most commonly figured with contiguous circles or wreaths, which enclose divers subjects: sometimes the chariot-race in the Hippodrome, or the consular sacrifice, the Byzantine emperors, as consuls of the Republic, being the chief figures; the lion-hunt in the emperor's arena or the park of the Great King; the gladiator again dealing with his lion in the arena, and probably doing duty for Samson in the eyes of the devout Byzantine Christian; all these subjects take us away into classical times. But there are other subjects within these Byzantine or early mediæval garlands which carry us further back, and hint at a time before the dawn of history, much simpler though they be on the surface; for often these circles are inhabited (to use an heraldic phrase) by beasts, winged or otherwise, griffins, elephants and birds, opposing one another (again in heraldic phrase) on either side of an upright object, sometimes branched, variously. Now, though you may think that this is a very natural way of filling a circle ornamentally, yet I think it has been conclusively proved that these beasts and their dividing object are symbols of ancient worship, the object being perhaps translated by the Zoroastrians as the holy fire, though originally signifying the holy tree, which has played such a curious part in ancient symbolism, or betokening of mysteries.

So then Constantinople takes us back not only to the time of the Cæsars on one side, but on the other also to that of the Great King of Persia, to the Kings of Assyria, the monarchs of Babylon, and far beyond them to the Accadian

people and their astronomical lore. But if Constantinople was the capital of the weaver's art till the twelfth century, during the next two centuries Palermo took her place. The chroniclers tell us that just in the middle of the twelfth century, Roger the Norman, King of Sicily, in a raid he made on the Eastern Empire, took Corinth, Thebes, and Athens, where there was still a considerable silk-weaving industry; and that part of the booty which he carried off from those towns consisted of the silk-weavers themselves and their families, whom he took back with him to Palermo and established in a royal factory attached to his palace, bidding them teach their mystery to his own people. From that time till past the middle of the mediæval period Sicily was the great workshop for silk goods.

Although this story has been much accepted, told as it was gravely and circumstantially, it must be looked upon as a legend founded on the undoubted fact that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Sicily was the headquarters of the silk-weaving craft. The population of Sicily consisted largely of Saracenic tribes, who kept amongst them the skill in the industrial arts which they had acquired (chiefly, no doubt, from Byzantium, though not always directly) in the early Middle Ages; besides Sicily had been a most important outwork of the Byzantine empire in its palmy days; was, in fact, much more important than the towns of Greece proper; and was not at all likely to have lacked its due weaving craft. Altogether it seems extremely unlikely that Roger should have been the first of the Norman kings to set up a royal weaving-shed, especially as the Norman kings from the first had affected to imitate oriental customs, reigning, as I have said, among a population which was really oriental; and this custom of a royal factory, connected as it was with the establishment of the seraglio, which, 'tis said, the Norman kings were not slow to adopt, would have seemed a necessity to a monarch at Palermo long before the time of Roger's raid on Greece. You may note at this place that these weaving-sheds of oriental potentates turned out those

rich stuffs which were especially used for presents and robes of honour, and had Arabic writing intermingled with the design; a fact which has served to date some of these webs beyond dispute, as the writing sometimes includes the name of the reigning prince. A word or two on these written stuffs will have to be said presently.

Anyhow, however the manufacture was established, there is no question that in the fourteenth century Palermo was the headquarters of the silk-weaving craft; and most happily we have abundance of evidence of the kind of work produced there, for a great many fragments have been preserved to us in the treasure-houses of the churches of that and the succeeding century. Nay, even in England, in spite of the Reformation, some evidence is left us of the long way that these beautiful goods travelled; for on the backgrounds of painted panels in the richly adorned screens of our East Anglian churches, and on the robes of the saints depicted thereon, are figured patterns more or less accurately taken from the Sicilian webs, which doubtless formed part of the vestments of the sacristy.

North Germany, where the Reformation went on in its earlier days more peaceably and with less destruction than in England, has, however, been the great storehouse of these invaluable treasures, the sacristy of the Church of St. Mary at Danzig being particularly rich in them. The museums at Vienna, the Louvre, and the South Kensington Museum here, are well stocked with examples, which I must say, as to ourselves, are not treated with the respect (by the public, I mean) which they deserve. For I must tell you that these stuffs, designed in the heyday of mediæval art, uniting the wild fancy and luxurious intricacy of the East with the straightforward story-telling imagination and clear definite drawing of mediæval Europe, are the very crown of design as applied to weaving.

To a certain extent they preserved the older fashions, and repeated, though not servilely, the patterns of the Byzantine epoch. The writing on the webs seems to have been used on

them as a sort of trade mark, implying that they were of fine oriental manufacture; only for the most part it is mere sham writing, a scrawl which has borrowed certain obvious forms from the real Arabic letters, whose graceful and energetic curves fitted them specially for this kind of written ornament; for the rest, the resources and the ingenuity of structure, the richness of imagination in these stuffs is amazing. Beasts, birds, and compound monsters are frequent, often arranged in opposition on each side of the holy tree or holy fire as aforesaid; but often simply passing their lives in the scenes of nature, and generally admirably drawn as to their characteristics, though of course generalized to suit the somewhat intractable material. Then we have castles, fountains, islands, ships, ship-sails, and other such inanimate objects. Finally the weaver uses the human form often enough, though seldom complete; half-women lean down from palm-trees, emerge from shell-like forms amongst the woods with nets in their hands, spread their floating hair over the whole pattern, water their hounds at the woodland fountains, and so forth. Now and again definite winged angels are introduced. In one whole class of designs a prominent feature is the sun-dog, as it used to be called in the older English tongue, a cloud barely hiding the sun, which sends its straight rays across the design with admirable effect.

And all these things are drawn at once with the utmost delicacy and complete firmness; there is no attempt to involve or obscure anything, yet the beauty of the drawing and the ingenuity of the pattern combined give us that satisfying sense of ease and mystery which does not force us to keep following for ever the repetition of the pattern; in short, in most of the designs of this place and period there is nothing left to desire either for beauty, fitness, or imagination.

From Palermo the art of silk-weaving found its way into the more northern parts of Italy, and settled definitely at Lucca, the centre of a great silk-growing district, whose

manufacture overlaps that of Palermo in date, so that it is not easy to state with any certainty whether such or such a piece of goods was woven at one city or the other. But as the years passed a kind of design peculiarly graceful, but not so strongly accentuated as in the earlier patterns, marks this school; these patterns are generally founded on the vine; birds and animals are often introduced into them, but do not play such a prominent part as in the earlier cloths. As to the technique of these webs of Sicily and Lucca, it is on all sides admirable, and in nothing more so than its simplicity; so fertile was the designer, his work so crisp, elegant, and powerful at once, that it would have been the height of bad taste to complicate or huddle it up with tormenting the webs into ribs or stripes or honeycombs or herring-bones, or long weak floats of silk; these are the poor refuges from barrenness of invention which a less artistic age is driven to, and has used, and still uses in a most profuse and wearisome way.

One peculiarity I may note about all these early stuffs; gold is freely used in them, but the gold thread is not like that of our time and some centuries back, to wit, a thin ribbon of gilt silver twisted round a floss silk core, but is made by gilding strips of fine vellum and twisting that round a core of hemp or hard silk. This plan has both its advantages and disadvantages; it does not wear as well as the wire-twisted thread, but also is not so apt to tarnish. The Chinese still use similar gold thread, only by substituting gilt paper for gilt vellum do not make so good an article.

Before passing to the next century, I must mention that all this while much silk was made in the East. At Cairo and thereabouts was a manufactory of striped silk, in which the Arabic writing, real and finely designed, played a great part; in this work the gold was always flat strips of the gilt parchment which marks the special manufactory. In all cases you must remember there was at this time no essential difference between the ornament of East and West; even in architecture the resemblances are more noticeable than the differ-

ences; but of course in the lesser art we are considering, the needs of climate and manners had not the same influence as in architecture; accordingly we find not only the same details but the same patterns in use in Persia and Syria as in Sicily and Italy. It is also interesting to note that pieces of Chinese damask are not seldom to be found as the grounds of needle-embroidered ecclesiastical vestments, whose patterns are identical with those even now woven there. Textile Fabrics

As to Northern Europe, doubtless the ornamental weaving, which was mostly worsted, was chiefly tapestry work; but it seems that some kind of figured stuff other than that was made. In the edicts of S. Louis mention is made of *tapisserie à la haute lisse*, *tapisserie sarracenoise* (of which more anon); and also of *tapisseries nostrez*, which last are obviously goods made in a long piece for cutting and joining. My own impression is that these *tapisseries nostrez* (judging by the context) were like the rudely flowered stuff traditionally made by the Italian peasants to-day, in the Abruzzi, for instance, and of which the Roman peasant women's aprons are made. This impression is chiefly founded on the fact that exactly the same make of cloth is woven in Iceland for coverlets, saddle-cloths, and the like, the inference being that it was formerly in use very widely throughout Europe; it seems, however, that early in the fourteenth century there was some sort of silk-weaving and even velvet-weaving in Paris, but I imagine it to have either been plain weaving or tapestry, and the velvet to have been made like a carpet. One may note, as showing clearly that the East made mechanically-woven cloth and the West tapestries, that when the unlucky Frenchmen who were taken by Bajazet at the rout of Nicopolis, in the year 1396, were arranging their ransom with him, and were trying to find out with what rarities they would be likely to soften the heart of their conqueror, they were told that he had a turn for the fine tapestry of Arras, "if so be they were of good ancient stories"; fine linen of Rheims would not come amiss to him either, or fine scarlets

(more of those afterwards): "for," said their friends, "as to cloths of silk and gold the king and the lords there in Turkey have of them enough and to spare."

The fifteenth century brings us to Florence and Venice, where the splendid cloths were wrought which were used so profusely in the magnificent stateliness of the later Middle Ages. This is a part of the subject that wants treating clinically, so to say; that is, we should be alongside some of the fine specimens in the best museums in order to make you understand it properly. Nothing can exceed the splendour of some of these Florentine and Venetian webs, whose speciality was a particular kind of rich velvet and gold, often with one pile raised on the top of another. In these cloths the vellum-twisted gold gives place to gold thread as we know it, but gilded so thickly that it is not uncommon to find specimens where the gold is very little, if at all, tarnished.

Rich and splendid as these cloths are, they have, to a certain extent, lost some of the imaginative interest of the earlier designs; it would not be true to say that they depend on their material for the pleasure they give, because in these great patterns, founded on vegetation of the thistle and artichoke kind, there is a vigour and freedom that is most delightful and captivating; but they are more architectural and less picture-like than the Sicilian stuffs; the strange monsters, the fairy woods and island shores, the damsel-peopled castles, palm-trees and shells, the lions drinking at the woodland fountain, hawk, swan, mallard, and dove, the swallow and her nestlings, and the hot sun breaking through the clouds —all these wonders and many another have given place to skilfully and beautifully arranged leaves and tendrils. As we shall see, later on, picture-weaving had reached its height by this time, and there was something of a division of labour between the two kinds of weaving-design; at the same time the design was absolutely pure and suitable to its purpose; no atom of corruption had crept in.

Now as to the relation of this design to that of the East; they still marched close together until the false taste of

the Renaissance began to affect the later mediæval work. Throughout there is more of distinct elegance in the eastern work, and that more especially in that kind of design which we call Persian.

The sixteenth century saw the change in woven work which fell upon all the architectural arts. I have said that weaving is conservative of patterns and methods, and this is very obvious in this great period of change; one may say that the oriental-gothic feeling, which was the very well-spring of fine design in this art, lasted side by side with divers new fashions, some of which were merely the outcome of the general pseudo-classical feeling, and shown in detail rather than general arrangement of the pattern, and in some pieces of fantastic ugliness which indicated only too surely the coming degradation of the weaving art.

By the first years of the seventeenth century that degradation had befallen the art in Europe, in fact it was becoming, or had become no longer an art, but a trade, as we very properly nowadays call work, which is really but an accident of the profit-market. I need not, therefore, trace its degradation further, though that degradation was checked, to a certain extent, by the traditions of the better times; and some good work was done until the great flood of the vileness of the eighteenth century swamped everything, and prepared the way for the inanity of the nineteenth; which, in its turn, let us hope, is doomed to prepare the way for a new life once more, even in this small corner of the result of man's intelligence, the textile arts.

Having thus gone very briefly through the story of mechanical weaving, I must now turn back to take up the other side of weaving, and talk of it as producing something which we must call pictures for want of a better word. I have said that in the early days of Greek civilization the more elaborately figured cloth must have been either embroidery or tapestry; of course in the later classical times, when the mechanical arts had attained a great degree of perfection, some of this elaborate work might have been done in the mechani-

cal loom; but judging from Ovid's description of the contest between Minerva and Arachne, which at least admits the possibility of weaving quite an elaborate picture (for at least they were not embroidering), tapestry-work must have been practised in classical times. But we need not dwell very long upon these times of uncertain evidence and guess-work, since we have in later times such abundance of clear material for carrying out our inquiries. It is at least pretty certain, as I have already said, that all the more elaborate figured hangings actually made in the north of Europe before the end of the fourteenth century were woven in the tapestry loom; a piece of such work, North German, or perhaps Scandinavian, of the beginning of the twelfth century, is preserved at the South Kensington Museum, and is itself a portion of a larger piece at Lyons. The design of this piece is practically an imitation in tapestry of the mechanically woven patterns of the south-east of Europe; its design being of that kind of contiguous circles enclosing monsters of which I spoke before. It is worth while noting that patterns of exactly the same character have been traditionally used in Iceland till within the last hundred years, only by that time they had got to be done by means of worsted embroidery upon linen. Now of course you understand that these tapestry cloths were done always for special decorative purposes, for wall-hangings and curtains, I mean; their thick, heavy, and rigid texture unfitting them for use as garment-cloth to the same degree that it would fit them for use as hangings. As on the one hand the northern craftsmen, who had, by the way, to work chiefly in wool, as I have remarked, had not learned the special mystery of the mechanical figure-weaver from the East, so also this kind of wall-hanging would be likely in the cold, damp climate of the North to take the place of the wall-pictures which so commonly decorated important buildings in the south of Europe. This in fact happened, and the use of tapestry hangings grew commoner as pictures grew more elaborate; the earlier pictured tapestry hangings partook of the simplicity of the paintings of the time, as one can clearly

see by the one or two precious relics of that period which we have left. These simple pictured cloths were no doubt woven all over the north of Europe, but one of the chief places of manufacture in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was Paris. I have mentioned the edicts of the time of S. Louis which show that the craft of tapestry-weaving, *tapisserie à la haute lisse* as they call it, was an important craft at that time. Later on, in the second half of the fourteenth century, the tapestry-weavers are frequently mentioned at Arras (which city, as you know, has given its name to the whole art), Tournai, Valenciennes, Lille, and Douai; Flanders, in fact, was taking the place in tapestry-weaving which it filled to the end. In the last years of the fourteenth century there is much mention made of the craft, and the names of two designers are mentioned, John of Bruges and Nicholas Battailles, who were both in the employment of Charles the Fifth of France.

There is fortunately a piece of tapestry still in existence of this period, a portion of a great hanging made for the Cathedral of Angers. It represents scenes from the Apocalypse, arranged in frames and divided by figures of the prophets twice the size of life; it is a grand and monumental work, severe in style, and decidedly belonging, especially as to its scheme of decoration, to the fourteenth rather than the fifteenth century, though it was not finished till about 1453. Of about the same period are certain cloths made in Germany on a small scale, not above four feet high or so. These are quaint and playful in subject and design, and have a domestic sort of look about them; in fact I think they were made in the houses they were intended to decorate. The subjects are chiefly secular; scenes from romances, sports and pastimes, the occupations of the months, and so forth; they were probably meant for what were called dorsars, that is, cloths to hang at the backs of the diners' benches in the hall; the South Kensington Museum has some good specimens of these.

From the middle of the fifteenth century the art of tapestry-weaving went on vigorously, and we have many specimens left us of the time, at least of the latter half of the century.

It may interest you to hear what some of the subjects of the tapestries were which Sir John Fastolf left behind him at Caistor in Norfolk. You must remember he was a powerful country gentleman, say of second rank. "Imprimis j clothe of Arras, clipped the schipherds clothe. Item j of the Assumpsion of Oure Lady.... Item j clothe of IX Conquerouris," the Nine Worthies, doubtless. "Item j clothe of the Siege of Faleys for the west side of the hall. Item j clothe of Arras with III archoways on scheting a doke in the water with a crossbowe. Item j clothe of Arras with a gentlewoman harping by j castle in the midst of the clothe." There are a great many more in the inventory from which this is taken, but these will serve as specimens of the woven decorations from the walls of Caistor Castle in the middle of the sixteenth century. One of the finest pieces of tapestry left, by the way, you will find under the minstrels' gallery in the Great Hall at Hampton Court, somewhat in the dark; it is in good preservation, and the colour is very beautiful; the drawing is both refined and vigorous, much resembling in style the piece preserved at Berne which is said to have been designed by Roger van der Weyden. Of about the same period (say 1460) is a piece at South Kensington Museum of the three Fates standing on a prostrate lady. This beautiful piece is a representative of a particularly pleasing kind of decoration, where figures are introduced on a background of conventional flowers; the finest specimen of this, to my knowledge, is in one of the smaller rooms at the Hôtel de Cluny at Paris, but unluckily the guardians of that fine museum have nearly hidden it with heavy pieces of furniture. I think we must consider this kind of work as belonging in spirit to the fourteenth century, though it lasted right into the sixteenth.

Well, tapestry went on getting more and more elaborate, and reached its turning point about the first years of the sixteenth century, of which period the South Kensington Museum has now, I am happy to say, some very noble specimens, equal in fact to any of the time. The tapestry of this period, however, though so much more like a picture than that of

the earlier period as to be crowded with figures, and to deal freely with all explanatory accessories, houses, chariots, landscapes, and so on, nevertheless is carefully designed on the principles proper to the art. The figures are arranged in planes close up to one another, and the cloth is pretty much filled with them, a manner which gives a peculiar richness to the designs of this period. The opposing fault to this is the arrangement of figures and landscape as in a picture proper, with foreground, middle-distance, and distance; which plan of arrangement, in a woven hanging in which the peculiar qualities of a picture must be lacking, gives a poor unfilled-up look at a far greater expense of labour and ingenuity than went to the production of the more conventional arrangement. Textile Fabrics

We have now come to the end of the Gothic period of this noble art of picture-weaving. The middle of the sixteenth century saw the above-mentioned change take place, and thenceforward the faults, which accompanied the degradation of all the arts from that time onward, had their influence on tapestry, which, however, died hard, so to say. Up to the first quarter of the seventeenth century tapestries were still made, which, though they had lost all the romance and direct beauty of the Gothic period, had some claims to be considered decorative objects. The following period saw the execution of works at an enormous expense which were a very bad substitute for the yellow-wash of a stable. Up to this time the execution at least of these pictured cloths had been pure and reasonable, had not attempted in any way to imitate the execution of the brush. But from the times of the Grand Monarque and the establishment of that hatching-nest of stupidity, the Gobelins, all that was changed, and tapestry was now no longer a fine art, but an upholsterer's toy.

We will leave it in that mud of degradation to have a few words with its congener, carpet-weaving. Now as tapestry was entirely a western art, so is carpet-weaving altogether an eastern one. 'Tis clearly an art of the peoples who dwell in tents or tent-like houses; of dusky rooms with no furniture

save a few beautiful pots and a gleaming brass dish or so; of dry countries where mud is a rare treasure reserved for the sides of wells or tanks, and where people kick off their slippers and walk barefoot when they come into a house.

I think it is a doubtful point as to whether carpets proper were made in Europe before the seventeenth century; although some learned men think that the *tapisseries sarracenoises* mentioned in the edicts of Louis the Ninth's time were true piled carpet-work, and it must be said that their reasoning seems rather convincing. Anyhow, there is no direct evidence of carpet-making in mediæval Europe, where, as a matter of course, foot-carpets would be little used in the rough and very out-of-door life then led; but from the middle of the fifteenth century there is abundant evidence of the importation of eastern carpets into Europe, the most direct and satisfactory of which is given us by the pictures of the period, in which such goods are often figured; these show us carpets, doubtless made in Asia Minor, of geometrical designs always, the prototypes of which were obviously floor-mosaics; both the Flemish painters and the Italian paint these things with much accuracy and enjoyment. But besides these carpets there was undoubtedly another kind of design being carried out at the time, whose headquarters was Ispahan in Persia: this kind of design was elaborate, flowing, and founded on floral forms, very commonly mingled with animals and sometimes with human figures; in short, the geometrically designed carpets above mentioned have a direct analogy with the earlier Byzantine silk stuffs as to design, and this flowing Persian style with the freer designs which were woven in the looms of Palermo. Of these latter flowered carpets I do not pretend to fix the dates with any accuracy, but among the specimens I have seen, I will undertake to say that there are representatives of at least three different styles before the degradation of the art; the first being a pure, flowing style, following closely in detail the forms of the finest oriental architectural work, for instance, the plaster ornament at Cairo; the next affecting

much the same detail, but blended with animal forms; the third purely floral, flowing, and very fantastic and ingenious in the construction of its patterns. This last I think brings us in date to about the time of Shah Abbas (the upholder of the greatness of the restored Persian monarchy about the time of our Queen Elizabeth) and his immediate successors, that is, from 1550 to 1650 or so. After that the degradation began, but it took a very different form, as always is the case with eastern art, from what it would have done in Europe, where all degradation of art veils itself in the semblance of an intellectual advance; in the East, on the contrary, haste, clumsiness, rudeness, and the destruction of any intellectual qualities are the signs of degradation; a tendency in fact to mere disintegration. As to this special degradation of the carpet-making art, the thing to note about it is that it has as its subject-matter all the different styles I have mentioned; the Byzantine or floor-mosaic style, the flowing fourteenth-century, the scroll and beasts style, and the floral style. From the *disjecta membra* of these four are knocked up, so to say, the traditional designs which are found in comparatively modern eastern carpets, which in spite of all degradation are still generally very beautiful things, not altogether lacking in some sense of logical congruity, and generally good in colour.

It would be an endless task to follow all the ramifications of this art in the East; but I must just say that the Mussulman conquerors of India carried it to that peninsula, where it took root and flourished till quite our own days, chiefly using the more floral side of Persian design, but in some places curiously blending with it forms taken from the native art, Buddhist and Brahminical, and in others infected by the eccentric art of modern China. Modern commercialism has laid its poisonous touch upon this useful industry since the days when I was a young man, and to-day it is almost ruined as an art; those importers who have any taste having to exercise great pains and patience in getting fair specimens of it for sale at home.

I have now gone briefly through the tale of woven ornament, but before I say a few words on what may be called the artistic ethics of this art, I must very hurriedly speak to you of the art of dyeing, since upon that is founded all the ornamental character of textile fabrics. In doing so I will for convenience' sake use the present tense, but must ask you to translate it into the past, as this art most of all among the subsidiary ones has been turned into a trade, even to the extent that the public is beginning to be conscious of its loss in this respect, though it is quite helpless to remedy it; also I must ask you to remember that I am speaking as a dyer and not a scientific person.

Blue, red, yellow, and brown are the necessary colours from which a dyer makes all his shades, however numerous; all these colours are furnished by natural substances, which have, however, to be modified by the dyer's, or, if you will, chemist's ingenuity. Of blues there is only one real dye, indigo, to wit; this dye in the ancient classical and the European mediæval countries was obtained from woad, the Germanic name for an indigoferous plant, which can be grown in rich soils as far north at least as Lincolnshire; whereas the true indigo can only be grown in tropical or subtropical countries. Indigo, as long as it keeps its colour and nature, is insoluble and therefore unfit for dyeing; it has therefore to be turned into white indigo by means of deoxidation, which is effected (I must be brief and not exhaustive here) chiefly by fermentation; the white indigo is then soluble by alkalies. This deoxidation is called by the dyers "setting the blue vat"; and this setting by means of fermentation, the oldest and best way, is a very ticklish job, and the capacity of doing so indicates the past master in dyeing.

The next colour in importance is red; two kinds of substances produce it. First the powdered root of plants, called in the Germanic tongues madder; of the madder-producing plants there are several kinds, for instance, clavers or goose grass, galium verum (Our Lady's bed-straw) and wood-ruff,

but they are all poor in dyeing matter, the true madder having to be carefully cultivated in good soil. Secondly, there are the insect reds; kermes or coccus, the scarlet of the ancients, which lives, or grows rather, on a prickly oak on the Mediterranean shores; the lac insect, chiefly in India, and cochineal in Mexico and South America. Of these, madder dyes a dullish blood-red; kermes, a central red tending towards scarlet; lac, a coarse, violent scarlet; and cochineal (used variously), crimson and scarlet.

Next comes yellow, which is vegetable again, and again of two kinds; one bright yellow from lemon upwards, the other brown yellow; weld is the representative of the first; the others are extracted from wood barks chiefly, and are all more or less astringent. Now these reds and yellows are dyes of a very different quality from indigo; the textile fibres have little or no affinity for them, and have before they are dyed with them to be impregnated with mineral* substances for which the dyes have an affinity; these are principally alumina and tin. So used we call these metals mordants; the widest spread and most ancient mordant is the alum of commerce. The fibres being steeped or boiled in these mordants, the dyeing forms a lake on the surface of the fibre, and the trick is done. The browns are, firstly, vegetable astringents; the extract of walnut root or walnut hulls is the representative of that: and secondly, mineral, from the solution of iron, the oxide of which, that is to say yellow ochre, can be formed on fibre, and is especially useful in cotton and linen dyeing as a brownish, yellow, or buff dye. The other colours are made by mixtures of those above; green, for instance, is first dyed in the blue vat, then mordanted and dyed yellow; purple, blue vat again, mordanted and dyed red; black, blue vat, mordant and red, mordant and yellow, or blue vat and brown. The blue vat has to be continually in use for obtaining all kinds of sub-shades.

One famous and historical dye has been extinct for hun-

* Or sometimes, as in cochineal scarlet dyeing, the mordant is mixed with the dip bath.

dreds of years, the ancient purple, the use of which seems to have died out in the earliest Middle Ages; it was extracted from certain shell-fish, and was a very permanent and beautiful dye, varying in shade from violet to a fine, solid, and somewhat sombre red-purple.

You must be more careful to distinguish this dye from the other famous ancient one than some of the poets have been. This is the Al-kermes or coccus above mentioned, which produces with an ordinary aluminous mordant a central red, true vermilion, and with a good dose of acid a full scarlet, which is the scarlet of the Middle Ages, and was used till about the year 1656, when a Dutch chemist discovered the secret of getting a scarlet from cochineal by the use of tin, and so produced a cheaper, brighter, and uglier scarlet, much to the satisfaction of the civilized world; which has, for the last three hundred years, always greeted with enthusiasm every invention which tends to make its clothes and dwellings uglier and more inconvenient. I regret that I have but a short space to say a very few words about the last textile which I mentioned to you, dye-painted or printed cloth, to wit, and about which I could hardly say anything till I had given the foregoing short account of dyeing, with which art it is intimately connected. I have mentioned the fact that Pliny makes it clear to us that this art was known to the ancient Egyptians; but it most probably had its origin in India, a country of all others fittest for following the art on account of its peculiar climate and its wealth of dyeing materials; whether or not the art was practised in mediæval Europe in any form is doubtful, but it does appear at least possible that some of the "stained cloths" which we have oftenest supposed to be merely pigment painting in distemper were dye-painted. In the middle of the sixteenth century the art was firmly established in Persia, whose elegant and beautiful pattern-designing from that time forth has made certain forms of ornament quite familiar to us in the chintzes that were freely imported into England from the end of the seventeenth century onward; for it goes almost without

saying that this Persian ornament conquered everything of cotton printing in India, except the cloths which were made for special purposes, figured with the personages and scenes of the Brahmin mythology. It is hardly worth while as an artist going into the history of this art in Europe; since whatever was really fine in it was little more than a literal copy of Indian or Persian originals; of which latter one may say that the peculiarities of the manufacture gave opportunities for special freedom of design and very beautiful colour, founded on the two most important dyeing drugs, madder and indigo.

I did not mean from the first to include the pleasing art of embroidery in this discourse on textiles; so here we will end our sketch, and will conclude with very lightly considering the artistic ethics of the subject, as I promised. Don't be alarmed, it is but a word or two as to the general quality of the design of textiles in good periods. You will find that whatever merit there may be in textile ornament flows always from an instinct for the fit use of material amongst men of simple and manly lives; which instinct is so strong in pure times of art, that its effects are most obvious to us when the designer, who in those days was also the weaver, was thinking least of his materials, when he was wrapped up in the invention of his design and the beauty of its hues; it was in second-rate times of design, such as in that period of splendid Florentine velvet-weaving I have told you of, that the material was as much thought of as the design, or it may be more so; when in fact the design was used for the display of splendour of material.

In the times of the degradation of the art, with the history of which I have not thought it worth while to trouble you, people by exaggerating this fault fell into another which seems at first sight almost the opposite one; they gradually forgot that the material had anything to do with the design at all, in fact they often spent time and pains to make, for instance, woven silk look like printed paper and so forth. Moreover in the fine time of art what the designer

thought of was always in some way to appeal to the imagination; in other words, to tell some story, however imperfectly; he had not time, therefore, for the petty ingenuities of the later days, he was determined to let us know what he had in his mind, and he, unconsciously maybe, well understood that he was to use fair colour and beautiful form in the simplest and most direct way in order to carry out his purpose. So treated, the design of even a scrap of cloth becomes elevated by human intelligence, and has in its humble way distinct intellectual value; it becomes a thing which no intelligent unprejudiced man has any right to pass by with contempt, as a piece of mere frivolity; and I must say point blank, that unless we can elevate our design into this region of fancy and imagination, we were better to have no ornament at all; for to my mind as a mere commercial necessity, a bit of trade finish, it is unspeakably contemptible. You may easily imagine that I have not time to give you any hints as to the way of elevating our ornament on wares, nor perhaps would this be quite the best place in which to treat the subject, which it seems to me if properly treated would lead us into very serious matters indeed.

One hint, however, I should like to give you; I am myself an ornamentalist, a maker of would-be pretty things. Yet I will not try to press on you the fact that there is nothing like leather; rather, I would say, be cautious of over-ornamenting your houses and your lives with cheap unenduring prettiness; have as few things as you can, for you may be sure that simplicity is the foundation of all worthy art; be sure that whatever ornament you have is proper and reasonable for the sort of life you want to lead, and don't be led by the nose by fashion into having things you don't want. In looking forward towards any utopia of the arts, I do not conceive to myself of there being a very great quantity of art of any kind, certainly not of ornament, apart from the purely intellectual arts; and even those must not swallow up too much of life. As to ornamental art (so called), I can,

under our present conditions, looking forward from out of the farrago of rubbish with which we are now surrounded, chiefly see possible negative virtues in the externals of our household goods; can see them never shabby, pretentious, or ungenerous, natural and reasonable always; beautiful also, but more because they are natural and reasonable than because we have set about to make them beautiful. We need not think that this will be an easy matter to bring about, but when it is brought about, I do believe that some sort of genuine art and ornament will accompany it, it may be in rather a Spartan way at first; from that time onward we shall have art enough, and shall have become so decent and reasonable, that every household will have become a quiet, daily, unadvertised Health Exhibition.

Textile Fabrics

ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORY. A PAPER READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS, ON JULY 1, 1884.

WE of this Society at least know the beauty of the weathered and time-worn surface of an ancient building, and have all of us felt the grief of seeing this surface disappear under the hands of a "restorer"; but though we all feel this deeply enough, some of us perhaps may be puzzled to explain to the outside world the full value of this ancient surface. It is not merely that it is in itself picturesque and beautiful, though that is a great deal; neither is it only that there is a sentiment attaching to the very face which the original builders gave their work, but dimly conscious all the while of the many generations which should gaze on it; it is only a part of its value that the stones are felt to be, as Mr. Ruskin beautifully puts it, speaking of some historic French building, now probably changed into an academic model of its real self—that they are felt to be "the very stones which the eyes of St. Louis saw lifted into their places." That sentiment is much, but it is not all; nay, it is but a part of the especial value to which I wish to-day to call your attention, which value briefly is, that the untouched surface of ancient architecture bears witness to the development of man's ideas, to the continuity of history, and, so doing, affords never-ceasing instruction, nay education, to the passing generations, not only telling us what were the aspirations of men passed away, but also what we may hope for in the time to come.

You all know what a different spirit has animated history in these latter days from that which used to be thought enough to give it interest to thinking men. Time was, and not so long ago, when the clever essay writer (rather than historian) made his history surrounded by books whose value he weighed rather by the degree in which they conformed to an arbitrary standard of literary excellence, than by

any indications they might give of being able to afford a glimpse into the past. So treated, the very books were not capable of yielding the vast stores of knowledge of history which they really possessed, if dealt with by the historical method. It is true that for the most part these books were generally written for other purposes than that of giving simple information to those to come after; at their honestest the writers were compelled to look on life through the spectacles thrust on them by the conventional morality of their own times; at their dishonestest, they were servile flatterers in the pay of the powers that were. Nevertheless, though the art of lying has always been sedulously cultivated by the world, and especially by that part of it which lives on the labour of others, it is an art which few people attain to in its perfection, and the honest man by the use of sufficient diligence can generally manage to see through the veil of sophistry into the genuine life which exists in those written records of the past; nay, the very lies themselves, being for the most part of a rough and simple nature, can often be dissolved and precipitated, so to say, into historical substance, into negative evidence of facts. But the academical historians of whom I have spoken were not fitted for the task; they themselves were cursed with a fatal though unconscious dishonesty; the world of history which they pictured to themselves was an unreal one; to them there were but two periods of continuous order, of organized life: the period of Greek and Roman classical history was one, the time from the development of the retrospection into that period till their own days was the other; all else to them was mere accidental confusion, strange tribes and clans with whom they had no relation, jostling against one another for no purpose save that of a herd of bisons; all the thousands of years devoid of creation, laden only with mere obstruction, and out of that, as I said, two periods of perfection, leaping fully equipped like Pallas from the brain of Zeus. A strange conception, truly, of the history of the "famous men and our fathers that begat us," but one which could not hold out long against the

natural development of knowledge and society. The mists of pedantry slowly lifted and showed a different picture; inchoate order in the remotest times, varying indeed among different races and countries, but swayed always by the same laws, moving forward ever towards something that seems the very opposite of that which it started from, and yet the earlier order never dead but living in the new, and slowly moulding it to a recreation of its former self. How different a spirit such a view of history must create it is not difficult to see. No longer shallow mockery at the failures and follies of the past, from a standpoint of so-called civilization, but deep sympathy with its half-conscious aims, from amidst the difficulties and shortcomings that we are only too sadly conscious of to-day; that is the new spirit of history: knowledge I would fain think has brought us humility, and humility hope of that perfection which we are obviously so far short of.

Now, further, as to the instruments of this new knowledge of history, were they not chiefly two: study of language and study of archæology? that is, of the expression of men's ideas by means of speech, and by means of handiwork, in other words the record of man's creative deeds. Of the first of these instruments, deeply as I am interested in it, and especially on the side which, tending towards comparative mythology, proclaims so clearly the unity of mankind, of this I lack the knowledge to speak, even if I had the time; on the second, archæology, I am bound to speak, as it is above all things the function of our Society to keep before people's eyes its importance as an instrument of the study of history, which does in very truth lead us towards the solution of all the social and political problems over which men's minds are busied.

I am all the more bound to speak on this subject because, in spite of the ascendancy which the new spirit of history has over cultivated minds, we must not forget that many minds are uncultivated, and in them the pedantic spirit still bears sway; and you will understand that when I speak of uncultivated minds, I am not thinking of the lower classes, as

we uncivilly, but too truly, call them, but of many of those who are in responsible positions, and responsible especially as to the guardianship of our ancient buildings; indeed, to meet one conceivable objection, I can understand a man saying that the half-ignorant, half-instructed, and wholly pedantic way of dealing with an ancient building is historical also, and I can admit some logic in the objection. Destruction is, alas! one of the forms of growth; indeed those pedantic historians I have been speaking of had their share also in history, and it is a curious question, which I cannot follow at present, as to how far their destructive pedantry was a sign of strength as compared with our reasonable research and timidity; I say that I cannot follow this question up, though I think it would lead to conclusions astonishing to some people, and so will content myself with saying that if the narrowness, the vulgarity of mind (I know no other word) which deals with our ancient monuments as if Art had no past and is to have no future, be an historical development (and I don't gainsay it), so also is the spirit which animates us to resist that vulgarity: "for this among the rest was I ordained."

Now, I am sure that so far I have carried you with me as members of our Society; you cannot doubt that in one way or other the surface of an ancient building, the handling of the old handicraftsman that is, is most valuable and worthy of preservation, and I am sure also that we all feel instinctively that it cannot be reproduced at the present day; that the attempt at reproduction not only deprives us of a monument of history, but also of a work of art. In what follows I have to attempt the task of showing you that this impossibility of reproduction is not accidental, but is essential to the conditions of life at the present day; that it is caused by the results of all past history, and not by a passing taste or fashion of the time; and that consequently no man, and no body of men, however learned they may be in ancient art, whatever skill in design or love of beauty they may have, can persuade, or bribe, or force our workmen of to-day to do their work in

the same way as the workmen of King Edward I. did theirs. Wake up Theodoric the Goth from his sleep of centuries, and place him on the throne of Italy; turn our modern House of Commons into the Witenagemote (or meeting of the wise men) of King Alfred the Great: no less a feat is the restoration of an ancient building.

Now, in order to show you that this is necessary and inevitable, I am compelled very briefly to touch upon the conditions under which handiwork has been produced from the classical times onward; in doing so I cannot avoid touching on certain social problems, on the solution of which some of you may differ from me. In that case I ask you to remember that though the Committee has ordered me to read this paper to you, it cannot be held responsible for any opinions outside the principles advocated in its published documents. The Society should not be regarded as dangerous, except, perhaps, to the amusements of certain country parsons and squires, and their wives and daughters.

Well, it must be admitted that every architectural work is a work of co-operation. The very designer, be he never so original, pays his debt to this necessity in being in some form or another under the influence of tradition; dead men guide his hand even when he forgets that they ever existed. But furthermore, he must get his ideas carried out by other men; no man can build a building with his own hands; every one of those men depends for the possibility of even beginning his work on someone else; each one is but part of a machine; the parts may be but machines themselves, or may be intelligent, but in either case they must work in subordination to the general body. It is clear that men so working must be influenced in their work by their conditions of life, and the man who organizes their labour must make up his mind that he can only get labour of a kind which those conditions have bred. To expect enthusiasm for good workmanship from men who for two generations have been accustomed by the pressure of circumstances to work slovenly would be absurd; to expect consciousness of beauty from men who for

ten generations have not been allowed to produce beauty, more absurd still. The workmanship of every piece of co-operative work must belong to its period, and be characteristic of it. Understand this clearly, which I now put in another form: all architectural work must be co-operative; in all co-operative work the finished wares can be no better in quality than the lowest, or simplest, or widest grade, which is also the most essential, will allow them to be. The kind and quality of that work, the work of the ordinary handicraftsman, is determined by the social conditions under which he lives, which differ much from age to age.

Architecture and History

Let us then try to see how they have differed, and glance at the results to Art of that difference; during which inquiry we shall have much more to do with the developed Middle Ages, with the work of which our Society is chiefly concerned, than with any other period.

In the classical period industrial production was chiefly carried on by slaves, whose persons and work alike belonged to their employers, and who were sustained at just such standard of life as suited the interests of the said employers. It was natural that under these circumstances industrialism should be despised; but under Greek civilization, at least, ordinary life for the free citizens, the aristocracy in fact, was simple, the climate was not exacting of elaborate work for the purposes of clothing and shelter, the race was yet young, vigorous, and physically beautiful. The aristocracy, therefore, freed from the necessity of rough and exhausting work by their possession of chattel slaves, who did all that for them, and little oppressed with anxieties for their livelihood, had, in spite of the constant brawling and piracy which forms their external history, both inclination and leisure to cultivate the higher intellectual arts within the limits which their natural love of matter of fact and hatred of romance prescribed to them; the lesser arts, meantime, being kept in rigid, and indeed slavish subordination to them as was natural. May I break off here to ask you to consider, in case any Athenian gentleman had attempted to build a Gothic cathedral in the

days of Pericles, what sort of help he would have had from the slave-labour of the day, and what kind of Gothic they would have produced for him?

Well, the ideal of art established by the intellect of the Greeks with such splendid and overwhelming success lasted throughout the whole Roman period also, in spite of the invention and use of the arch in architecture, or rather in building; and side by side with it chattel slavery, under somewhat changed conditions, produced the ordinary wares of life; the open-mouthed contempt for the results of industrial production expressed by the pedant Pliny, whether it were genuine or artificially deduced from the conventionalities of philosophy, well illustrates the condition of the slave-produced lesser arts of the later classical period.

Meantime, and while Pliny was alive, the intellectual arts of classical times had long fallen from their zenith, and had to wade through weary centuries of academicalism, from which they were at last redeemed by no recurrence of individual genius to the earlier and human period, but by the break-up of classical society itself; which involved the change of chattel slavery, the foundation of classical society, into serfdom or villeinage, on which the feudal system was based. The period of barbarism or disorder between the two periods of order was long doubtless, but the new order rose out of it at last, bright and clear; and in place of the system of aristocratic citizen and chattel slave without rights, dominated by the worship of the city (which was the ideal, the religion of classic society), was formed a system of personal duties and rights, personal service and protection in obedience to preconceived ideas of mankind's duties to and claims from the unseen powers of the universe. No doubt, as was natural in this hierarchical system, the religious houses, whose distinct duty it was to hold the hierarchical ideal up as a banner amongst imperfect men, fulfilled towards the arts in the earlier Middle Ages, amidst the field-serfs and their lords, the function which in classical times the cultivated Greek free man fulfilled amidst his crowd of enslaved menials. But

the serf was in a very different condition from the chattel slave; for, certain definite duties being performed for his lord, he was (in theory at least) at liberty to earn his living as he best could within the limits of his manor. The chattel slave, as an individual, had the hope of manumission, but collectively there was no hope for him but in the complete and mechanical overturn of the society which was founded on his subjection. The serf, on the other hand, was, by the conditions of his labour, forced to strive to better himself as an individual, and collectively soon began to acquire rights amidst the clashing rights of king, lord, and burgher. Also, quite early in the Middle Ages, a new and mighty force began to germinate for the help of labour, the first signs of secular combination among free men, producers, and distributors.

The gilds, whose first beginning in England dates from before the Norman Conquest, although they fully recognized the hierarchical conditions of society, and were indeed often in early times mainly religious in their aims, did not spring from ecclesiasticism, nay, in all probability, had their roots in that part of the European race which had not known of Rome and her institutions in the days of her temporal domination. England and Denmark were the foremost countries in the development of the gilds, which took root latest and most feebly in the Latinized countries.

The spirit of combination spread; the gilds, which at first had been rather benefit-societies or clubs than anything else, soon developed into bodies for the protection and freedom of commerce, and rapidly became powerful under the name of merchant-gilds; in the height of their power there formed under them another set of gilds, whose object was the regulation and practice of the crafts in freedom from feudal exactions. The older merchant-gilds resisted these newer institutions; so much so that in Germany there was bloody and desperate war between them; the great revolt of Ghent, you will remember as an illustration of this hostility, was furthered by the lesser crafts, as Froissart calls them;

and again remember that Ghent, the producing city, was revolutionary, Bruges, the commercial one, reactionary. In England the merchant-gilds changed in a more peaceable manner, and became in the main the corporations of the towns, and the craft-gilds took their definite place as regulators and protectors of all handicrafts. By the beginning of the fourteenth century the supremacy of the craft-gilds was complete, and at that period at least their constitution was thoroughly democratic. Mere journeymen there were none, the apprentices were sure, as a matter of course, to take their places as masters of their craft when they had learned it.

Now before we go on to consider the decline and fall of the gilds, let us look at the way in which the craftsman worked at that period: and first a word as to his conditions of life: for I must tell you very briefly that he lived, however roughly, yet at least far easier than his successor does now. He worked for no master save the public, he made his wares from beginning to end himself, and sold them himself to the man who was going to use them. This was the case at least with nearly all, if not all, the goods made in England; some of the rarer goods, such as silk cloth, did come into the chaffering-market, which had to be the case all the more for this, that the materials of any country were chiefly wrought into goods close to their birthplace. But even in the cases of these rarer goods they were made primarily for home consumption, and only the overplus came into the hands of the merchant; concerning which latter you must also remember that he was not a mere gambler in the haphazard of supply and demand as he is to-day, but an indispensable distributor of goods; he was paid for his trouble in bringing goods from a place where there was more than was needed of them to a country where there was not enough, and that was all; the laws against forestallers and regratters give an idea of how this matter of commerce was looked on in the Middle Ages, as commerce, i.e., not profitmongering. A forestaller was a man who bought up produce to hold it for a rise; a regratter, a man who bought and sold in the same market or within five miles of it. On the

advantages of the forestaller to the community it is scarcely necessary to dwell, I think: as to the regratter, it was the view of the benighted people of the Middle Ages that a man who bought, say, a hundredweight of cheese for twopence a pound at nine in the morning and sold it at eleven for threepence was not a specially useful citizen. I confess I am sufficiently old-fashioned and conservative to agree with them on that head, although I cannot help perceiving that all "business," properly so called, is now forestalling and regratting, and that we are all the slaves of those delightful and simple professions: so that the criminals of one age have become the benevolent masters of the next.

Well, anyhow, it followed from this direct intercourse between the maker and the consumer of goods, that the public in general were good judges of manufactured wares, and, in consequence, that the art, or religion rather, of adulteration was scarcely known; at least, it was easy to win the fame of a confessor, if not a martyr, of that noble creed.

Now, as to the manner of work, there was little or no division of labour in each craft; that I think is some mitigation of the evil, for I look upon it as such, of a man being bound down to one craft for his life long (as he is now also); some mitigation, because, after all, there was plenty of variety in the work of a man who made the whole of a piece of goods himself, instead of making always one little piece of a piece. Also you must note that the freemen of the gilds had their share in the pasture lands of the country, as every free man had. Port Meadow, at Oxford, for instance, was the communal pasture of the freemen of that city. These were the conditions of life and work of the English craftsmen of the fourteenth century. I suppose most of us have declined to accept the picture of him which we have had presented to us by the half ignorant and wholly misleading pedants of whom I have spoken before. We who have studied the remains of his handicraft have been, without any further research, long instinctively sure that he was no priest-ridden, down-trodden savage, but a thoughtful and vigorous man, and in

some sense, at least, free. That instinct has been abundantly confirmed by painstaking collectors of facts, like Mr. Thorold Rogers, and we now know that the gild craftsman led the sort of life in work and play that we should have expected from the art he produced. He worked, not for the profit of a master, but for his own livelihood, which, I repeat, he did not find it difficult to earn, so that he had a good deal of leisure, and being master of his time, his tools, and his material, was not bound to turn out his work shabbily, but could afford to amuse himself by giving it artistic finish; how different that is from mechanical or trade finish some of us, at least, have learned, maybe, by the way of Weeping Cross. Well, that artistic finish or ornament was not venal, it was given freely to the public, who, I rather think, paid for it by interest in and sympathy for the work itself, which, indeed, I consider a good payment in times when a man could live otherwise without payment more gross and material. For here I must make the confession that what is called in modern slang the "wages of genius," were much neglected by the builders of our ancient buildings; for art, as Mr. Thorold Rogers justly says, was widespread; the possession of some skill in it was the rule and not the exception. As a rule, those who could afford to pay for a building, were able to do the necessary planning and designing, obviously because they would naturally find help and harmonious intelligence among the men they had to employ. For instance, the tower of Merton College Chapel at Oxford was carried out by ordinary masons, under the superintendence of the Fellows of the College. Well, judging from the wretched tinkering that the present Fellows have allowed to be perpetrated on their beautiful succursal house, St. Albans' Hall, I would not venture to trust the most respectable Fellows of that ancient House with such a job now.

So it followed from this widespread skill in the arts, that those poor wretches who had skill and taste beyond their fellow-workmen, and who in consequence had pleasanter work than they, had to put up with a very moderate addi-

tional wage, and in some cases with nothing additional; it seems they could not make good the claim now preferred for that much sinned against, and much sinning, company, men of genius, that the conformation of their stomachs and the make of their skin is different from that of other men, and that consequently they want more to eat and drink and different raiment from their fellows. In most sober earnest, when we hear it said, as it often is said, that extra money payment is necessary under all circumstances to produce great works of art, and that men of special talent will not use those talents without being bribed by mere gross material advantages, we, I say, shall know what to reply. We can appeal to the witness of those lovely works still left to us, whose unknown, unnamed creators were content to give them to the world, with little more extra wages than what their pleasure in their work and their sense of usefulness in it might bestow on them.

Well, I must now say that it seems to me that a body of artificers, so living as we have seen, and so working, with simple machines or instruments, of which they were complete masters, had very great advantages for the production of architectural art, using that word at its widest; and that one would, reasoning a priori, expect to find in their work that thoughtfulness and fertility of resource, that blended freedom and harmonious co-operation, which, as a matter of fact, we do find in it. Nevertheless, in spite of this free intelligence of the mediæval workman, or even because of it, he was still compelled to work only as tradition would allow him to do. If it could ever have occurred to any man's mind to build some new Parthenon or Erechtheum by the banks of Thames, or Wharfe, or Wensum, in the fourteenth century, how far do you think his fellow-workman's skill would have been able to second his folly?

But we must leave the fourteenth century awhile, and hurry on in our tale of the workman's lot. I have said that the constitution of the craft-gild was at first thoroughly democratic or fraternal, but it did not long remain so. As

the towns grew bigger and population flowed to them from the enfranchised field-serfs and other sources, the old craftsmen began to form a separate and privileged class in the gilds with their privileged apprentices, and the journeyman at last made his appearance. After a while the journeymen attempted to form gilds under the master crafts, as the latter had done under the merchant-gilds; but the economic conditions of the time tending now more and more towards manufacturing for a profit, beat them, and they failed. Nevertheless, the conditions of work did not change much, the masters were checked by laws in favour of the journeymen, and wages rather rose than fell all through the fifteenth century; nor did division of labour begin till much later; everywhere the artisan was still an artist.

The beginning of the great change came with the Tudors in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, during which time England, from being a country of tillage cultivated for livelihood, became a grazing-country farmed for profit. He who runs may read the tale of this change and its miseries in the writings of More and Latimer. All I need say about it here is, that it had a very direct influence upon the conditions of life and manner of work of the artisans, for the crafts were now flooded by the crowds of landless men who had nothing but the force of their bodies to live upon, and were obliged to sell that force day by day for what those would give them who certainly would not buy the article labour unless they could make a profit by it. The brutal rapine with which the change of religion in England was carried out; the wanton destruction of our public buildings which accompanied the stealing of our public lands, doubtless played its part in degrading what art was still possible under the new conditions of labour.

But the Reformation itself was but one of the aspects of the new spirit of the time produced by great economical changes, and which dealt with art and its creator, labour, far more completely than any series of accidents could do, however momentous they might be. The change in the condi-

tions of labour went on speedily, though there was still a good deal of what may be called domestic manufacture; the workmen in the towns got to be more dependent on their employers, more and more mere journeymen, and a great change was coming over the manner of their work; the mere collection of them into big workshops under one master, in itself merely gave economy of space, rent, fire, lighting, and the rest, but it was the prelude to a much greater change; division of labour now began, and speedily gained head. Under the old mediæval conditions the unit of labour was a master craftsman who knew his business from beginning to end; such help as he had was from mere apprentices who were learning their business, and were not doomed to life-long service. But with the new system of master and men came this change, that the unit of production was a group, each member of which depended on every one of the others, and was helpless without them. Under this system, called the division of labour system, a man may be, and often is, condemned for the whole of his life to make the insignificant portion of an insignificant article of the market. I use the present tense, because this system of division of labour is still going on side by side with the last development of manufacturing for profit, of which more anon.

Now, it is necessary for you to understand that the birth and growth of this division of labour system was no mere accident, was not the result, I mean, of some passing and inexplicable fashion which caused men to desire the kind of work which could be done by such means; it was caused by the economical changes which forced men to produce no longer for a livelihood as they used to do, but for a profit. Almost all goods, all except those made in the most domestic way, had now to go through the market before they reached the users' hands. They were made for sale, not primarily for use, and when I say "they," I mean the whole of them; the art in them as well as their mere obvious utility was now become a marketable article, doled out according to the necessities of the capitalist who employed both machine-workman

and designer, fettered by the needs of profit; for by this time, you understand, the division of labour had so worked, that instead of all workmen being artists, as they once were, they were divided into workmen who were not artists, and artists who were not workmen.

This change was complete, or nearly so, by the middle of the eighteenth century: it is not necessary for me to trace the gradual degradation of the arts from the fifteenth century to this point. Suffice it to say that it was steady and certain; only where men were more or less outside the great stream of civilization, where life was rude, and production wholly domestic, did the art produced retain any signs of human pleasure: elsewhere pedantry reigned supreme. The picture-painters who were wont to show us, as through windows opened by them, the longings and lives of the saints and heroes, nay, the very heavens and city of God hanging over the earthly city of their love, were turned, what few of them were aught else than pretentious daubers, into courtly flatterers of ill-favoured fine ladies and stupid supercilious lords. As for the architectural arts, what could you expect to get of them from a set of human machines, co-operating indeed, but only for speed and precision of production, and designed for at best by pedants who despised the life of man, and at worst by mechanical drudges, little better in any way than the luckless workmen? Whatever might be expected, nothing was got but that mass of foolish toys and costly ministrations to luxury and ostentation, which has since those days been most worthily contemned under the name of upholstery.

Is that the end of the story of the degradation of the arts? No, there is another act to the drama—worse or better according as to whether you are contented to accept it as final, or have been stimulated to discontent, that is, hope for something better. I have told you how the workman was reduced to a machine, I have still to tell you how he has been pushed down from even that giddy eminence of self-respect.

At the close of the eighteenth century England was a

country that manufactured among other countries that manufactured: her manufactures were still secondary to her merely country life, and were mixed up with it; in fifty years all that was changed, and England was the manufacturing country of the world, the workshop of the world, often so called with much pride by her patriotic sons. Now this strange and most momentous revolution was brought about by the machinery which the chances and changes of the world, too long a tale even to hint at here, forced on our population. You must think of this great machine-industry as though on the one hand merely the full development of the effects of producing for profit instead of livelihood, which began in Sir Thomas More's time, yet on the other as a revolutionary change from that of the mere division of labour. The exigencies of my own work have driven me to dig pretty deeply into the strata of the eighteenth-century workshop system, and I could clearly see how very different it is from the factory system of to-day, with which it is commonly confounded; therefore it was with a ready sympathy that I read the full explanation of the change and its tendencies in the writings of a man, I will say a great man, whom, I suppose, I ought not to name in this company, but who cleared my mind on several points (also unmentionable here) relating to this subject of labour and its products. But this at least I must say, that whereas under the eighteenth-century division of labour system, a man was compelled to work for ever at a trifling piece of work in a base mechanical way, which, also, in that base way he understood, under the system of the factory and almost automatic machine under which we now live, he may change his work often enough, may be shifted from machine to machine, and scarcely know that he is producing anything at all: in other words, under the eighteenth-century system he was reduced to a machine; under that of the present day he is the slave to a machine. It is the machine which bids him what to do on pain of death by starvation. Yes, and by no means metaphorically so; the machine, for instance, can, if it pleases, if it chooses to hurry,

make him walk thirty miles a day instead of twenty, and send him to the workhouse if he refuses.

Now if you ask me ('tis a by-question) which is the worst off, the machine-workman of the eighteenth century or the slave to the machine of the nineteenth, I am bound to say that I think the latter is. If I gave you my reasons, few of you would agree with me, and I am not sure that you would allow me to finish this discourse: at any rate they are somewhat complicated. But the question as to which set of workmen produced the better work can be answered with little complication. The machine-workman had to be well skilled in his contemptible task at least, the slave to the machine needs but little skill, and, as a matter of fact, his place has been taken by women and children, and what skill is needed in the work goes to the overlooking of the labours of these latter. In short, the present system of the factory and its dominating machine tends to do away with skilled labour altogether.

Here, then, is a strange contrast, which I most seriously invite you to consider, between the craftsman of the Middle Ages and him of to-day. The mediæval man sets to work at his own time, in his own house; probably makes his tool, instrument, or simple machine himself, even before he gets on to his web, or his lump of clay, or what not. What ornament there shall be on his finished work he himself determines, and his mind and hand designs it and carries it out; tradition, that is to say the minds and thoughts of all workmen gone before, this, in its concrete form of the custom of his craft, does indeed guide and help him; otherwise he is free. Nor must we forget that even if he lives in a town, the fields and sweet country come close up to his house, and he at whiles occupies himself in working in them, and more than once or twice in his life he has had to take the bow or brown-bill from the wall, and run his chance of meeting the great secret face to face in the ranks of battle; oftenest, indeed, in other men's quarrels, yet sometimes in his own, nor wholly unsuccessfully then.

But he who has taken his place, how does he work and live? Something of that we all know. There he has to be at the factory gates by the time the bell rings, or he is fined or "sent to grass." Nay, not always will the factory gate open to him; unless the master, controlled himself by a market of which he knows little and the "hand" nothing, allows him space to work in and a machine to work at, he must turn back and knock about the streets, as many thousands are doing to-day in England. But suppose him there, happy before his machine; up and down he has to follow it, day in, day out, and what thoughts he has must be given to something else than his work. I repeat, 'tis as much as he can do to know what thing the machine (not he) is making. Design and ornament, what has he to do with that? Why, he may be tending a machine which makes a decent piece of work, or, on the other hand, may be an accomplice (a very small one) in turning out a blatant piece of knavery and imposture; he will get as much wages for one as the other, nor will one or the other be in the least degree within his control. All the religion, morality, philanthropy, and freedom of the nineteenth century, will not help him to escape that disgrace. Need I say how and where he lives? Lodged in a sweltering dog-hole, with miles and miles of similar dog-holes between him and the fair fields of the country, which in grim mockery is called "his." Sometimes on holidays, bundled out by train to have a look at it, to be bundled into his grimy hell again in the evening. Poor wretch!

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Tell me, then, at what period of this man's working life will you pick him up and set him to imitating the work of the free crafts-gildsman of the fourteenth century, and expect him to turn out work like his in quality?

Well, not to weaken my argument by exaggeration, I admit that though a huge quantity of would-be artistic work is done by this slave of the machine at the bidding of some ridiculous market or other, the crafts relating to building have not reached that point in the industrial revolution; they are an example of my assertion that the eighteenth-

century division of labour system still exists, and works side by side with the great factory and machine system. Yet here, too, the progress of the degradation is obvious enough, since the similar craftsmen of the eighteenth century still had lingering among them scraps of tradition from the times of art now lost, while now in those crafts the division of labour system has eaten deep, from the architect to the hod-man, and, moreover, the standard of excellence, so far from its bearing any relation to that of the free workman of the gilds, has sunk far below that of the man enslaved by division of labour in the eighteenth century, and is not a whit better than that of the shoddy-maker of the great industries; in short, the workman of the great machine industry is the type of labour to-day.

Surely it is a curious thing that while we are ready to laugh at the idea of the possibility of the Greek workman turning out a Gothic building, or a Gothic workman turning out a Greek one, we see nothing preposterous in the Victorian workman producing a Gothic one. And this although we have any amount of specimens of the work of the Renaissance period, whose workmen, under the pedantic and retrospective direction of the times, were theoretically supposed to be able to imitate the ancient classical work, which imitation, as a matter of fact, turned out obstinately characteristic of their own period, and derived all the merit it had from those characteristics, a curious thing, and perhaps of all the signs of weakness of art at the present day one of the most discouraging. I may be told, perhaps, that the very historical knowledge, of which I have spoken above, and which the pedantry of the Renaissance and eighteenth century lacked, has enabled us to perform that miracle of raising the dead centuries to life again; but to my mind it is a strange view to take of historical knowledge and insight, that it should set us on the adventure of trying to retrace our steps towards the past, rather than give us some glimmer of insight into the future; a strange view of the continuity of history, that it should make us ignore the very changes which are

the essence of that continuity. In truth, the art of the past cycle, that of the Renaissance, which flickered out at last in the feeble twaddle of the dilettantism of the latter Georges, had about it, as I hinted above, a supercilious confidence in itself, which entirely forbade it to accept as desirable any imitation of style but one, which one was that which it regarded as part of itself. It could make no more choice in style than Greek or Gothic art could; it fully, if tacitly, admitted the evolution of history, accepted the division-of-labour workman, and so, indeed, did its best, and had a kind of life about it, dreary as that life was, and expressive enough of the stupid but fearless middle-class domination which was the essence of the period.

But we, I say, we refuse to admit the evolution of history. We set our slave to the machine to do the work of the free mediæval workman or of the man of the transition period indifferently. We, if no age else, have learnt the trick of masquerading in other men's cast-off clothes, and carry on a strange hypocritical theatrical performance, rather with timid stolidity than with haughty confidence, determined to shut our eyes to everything seriously disagreeable, nor heeding the silent movement of real history which is still going on around and underneath our raree show.

Surely such a state of things is a token of change—of change, speedy perhaps, complete certainly—of the visible end of one cycle and the beginning of another. For, strange to say, here is a society which on its cultivated surface has no distinct characteristics of its own, but floats, part of it hither, part thither, this set of minds drifting toward the beauty of the past, that toward the logic of the future, each tacitly at least believing that they need but count of heads on their side to establish a convention of many, which should rule the world despite of history and logic, ignoring necessity which has made even their blind feebleness what it is. And all the while beneath this cultivated surface works the great commercial system, which the cultivated look on as their servant and the bond of society, but which really is

their master and the breaker-up of society; for it is in itself and in its essence a war, and can only change its character with its death: man against man, class against class, with this motto, "What I gain you lose," that war must go on till the great change comes whose end is peace and not war.

And what are we, who are met together here after seven years of humble striving for existence, for leave to do something? Mere straws in that ocean of half-conscious hypocrisy which is called cultivated society? Nay, I hope not. At least, we do not turn round on history and say, This is bad and that is good; I like this and I don't like that; but rather we say, This was life, and these, the works of our fathers, are material signs of it. That life lives in you, though you have forgotten it; those material signs of it, though you do not heed them, will one day be sought for: and that necessity which is even now forming the society of the time to be, and shall one day make it manifest, has amongst other things forced us to do our best to treasure them, these tokens of life past and present. The society of to-day, anarchical as it is, is nevertheless forming a new order of which we in common with all those who, I will say it, have courage to accept realities and reject shams, are and must be, a part; so that in the long run our work, hopeless as it must sometimes seem to us, will not be utterly lost. For, after all, what is it that we are contending for? The reality of art, that is to say, of the pleasure of the human race. The tendency of the commercial or competitive society which has been developing for more than three hundred years, has been towards the destruction of the pleasure of life. But that competitive society has at last developed itself so far that, as I have said, its own change and death is approaching, and as one token of the change the destruction of the pleasure of life is beginning to seem to many of us no longer a necessity but a thing to be striven against. On the genuineness and reality of that hope the existence, the reason for existence, of our Society depends. Believe me, it will not be possible for a small knot of cultivated people to keep alive an interest in the art and

records of the past amidst the present conditions of a sordid and heart-breaking struggle for existence for the many, and a languid sauntering through life for the few. But when society is so reconstituted that all citizens will have a chance of leading a life made up of due leisure and reasonable work, then will all society, and not our "Society" only, resolve to protect ancient buildings from all damage, wanton or accidental, for then at last they will begin to understand that they are part of their present lives, and part of themselves. That will come when the time is ripe for it; for at present even if they knew of their loss they could not prevent it, since they are living in a state of war, that is to say, of blind waste.

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Surely we of this Society have had this truth driven home practically often enough, have often had to confess that if the destruction or brutification of an ancient monument of art and history was "a matter of money," it was hopeless striving against it. Do not let us be so feeble or cowardly as to refuse to face this fact, for, for us also, although our function in forming the future of society may be a humble one, there is no compromise. Let us admit that we are living in the time of barbarism betwixt two periods of order, the order of the past and the order of the future, and then, though there may be some of us who think (as I do) that the end of that barbarism is drawing near, and others that it is far distant, yet we can both of us, I the hopeful and you the unhopeful, work together to preserve what relics of the old order are yet left us for the instruction, the pleasure, the hope of the new. So may the times of present war be less disastrous, if but a little; the times of coming peace more fruitful.

THE REVIVAL OF ARCHITECTURE: AN ARTICLE IN THE "FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW," MAY 1888.

AMONG cultivated people at present there is a good deal of interest felt or affected in the ornamental arts and their prospects. Since all these arts are dependent on the master-art of architecture almost for their existence, and cannot be in a healthy condition if it is sick, it may be worth while to consider what is the condition of architecture in this country; whether or no we have a living style which can lay claim to a dignity or beauty of its own, or whether our real style is merely a habit of giving certain forms not worth noticing to an all-pervading ugliness and meanness.

In the first place, then, it must be admitted on all sides that there has been in this century something like a revival of architecture; the question follows whether that revival indicates a genuine growth of real vitality which is developing into something else, or whether it merely points to a passing wave of fashion which, when passed, will leave nothing enduring behind it. I can think of no better way of attempting a solution of this question than the giving a brief sketch of the history of this revival as far as I have noted it. The revival of the art of architecture in Great Britain may be said to have been a natural consequence of the rise of the romantic school in literature, although it lagged some way behind it, and naturally so, since the art of building has to deal with the prosaic incidents of every day life, and is limited by the material exigencies of its existence. Up to a period long after the death of Shelley and Keats and Scott, architecture could do nothing but produce on the one hand pedantic imitations of classical architecture of the most revolting ugliness, and ridiculous travesties of Gothic buildings, not quite so ugly, but meaner and sillier; and, on the other hand, the utilitarian brick box with a slate lid which the Anglo-Saxon generally in modern times considers as a good sensible house with no nonsense about it.

The first symptoms of change in this respect were brought about by the Anglo-Catholic movement, which must itself be considered as part of the romantic movement in literature, and was supported by many who had no special theological tendencies, as a protest against the historical position and stupid isolation of Protestantism. Under this influence there arose a genuine study of mediæval architecture, and it was slowly discovered that it was not, as was thought in the days of Scott, a mere accidental jumble of picturesqueness consecrated by ruin and the lapse of time, but a logical and organic style evolved as a matter of necessity from the ancient styles of the classical peoples, and advancing step by step with the changes in the social life of barbarism and feudalism and civilization. Of course it took long to complete this discovery, nor as a matter of fact is it admitted in practice by many of the artists and architects of to-day, though the best of them feel, instinctively perhaps, the influence of the new school of historians, of whom the late John Richard Green and Professor Freeman may be cited as examples, and who have long been familiar with it.

The Revival of Architecture

One unfortunate consequence the study of mediæval art brought with it, owing indeed to the want of the admission of its historical evolution just mentioned. When the architects of this country had learned something about the building and ornament of the Middle Ages, and by dint of sympathetic study had more or less grasped the principles on which the design of that period was founded, they had a glimmer of an idea that those principles belonged to the æsthetics of all art in all countries, and were capable of endless development; they saw dimly that Gothic art had been a living organism, but though they knew that it had perished, and that its place had been taken by something else, they did not know why it had perished, and thought it could be artifically replanted in a society totally different from that which gave birth to it. The result of this half-knowledge led them to believe that they had nothing to do but to design on paper according to the principles the

existence of which they had divined in Gothic architecture, and that the buildings so designed, when carried out under their superintendence, would be true examples of the ancient style, made alive by those undying principles of the art. On this assumption it was natural that they should attempt with confidence to remedy the injuries and degradations which the ignorance, brutality, and vulgarity of the post-Gothic periods had brought on those priceless treasures of art and history, the buildings yet left to us from the Middle Ages. Hence arose the fatal practice of "restoration," which in a period of forty years has done more damage to our ancient buildings than the preceding three centuries of revolutionary violence, sordid greed (utilitarianism so called), and pedantic contempt. This side of the subject I have no space to dwell on further here. I can only say that if my subject could be looked on from no other point of view than the relation of modern architecture to the preservation of these relics of the past, it would be most important to face the facts of the present condition of the art amongst us, lest a mere delusion as to our position should lead us to throw away these treasures which once lost can never be recovered. No doubt, on the other hand, this same half-knowledge gave the new school of architects courage to carry on their work with much spirit, and as a result we have a considerable number of buildings throughout the country which do great credit to the learning and talent of their designers, and some of them even show signs of genius struggling through the difficulties which beset an architect attempting to produce beauty in the midst of the most degrading utilitarianism.

In the early period of this Gothic revival the buildings thus produced were mostly ecclesiastical. The public were easily persuaded that the buildings destined for the use of the Anglican Church, which was obviously in part a survival from the Church of the Middle Ages, should be of the style which obtained in the period to which the greater part of its buildings belonged; and indeed it used to be customary

to use the word "ecclesiastical" as a synonym for mediæval architecture. Of course this absurdity was exploded among the architects at a very early stage of the revival, although it lingered long and perhaps still lingers amongst the general public. It was soon seen by those who studied the arts of the Middle Ages that there was no difference in style between the domestic and civil and the ecclesiastical architecture of that period, and the full appreciation of this fact marks the second stage in the "Gothic Revival." The Revival of Architecture

Then came another advance: those who sympathized with that great period of the development of the human race, the Middle Ages, especially such of them as had the gift of the historical sense which may be said to be a special gift of the nineteenth century, and a kind of compensation for the ugliness which surrounds our lives at present: these men now began not only to understand that the mediæval art was no mere piece of reactionary official ecclesiasticism or the expression of an extinct theology, but a popular, living, and progressive art—and that progressive art had died with it; they came to recognize that the art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries drew what vigour and beauty it had from the impulse of the period that preceded it, and that when that died out about the middle of the seventeenth century nothing was left but a *caput mortuum* of inanity and pedantry, which demanded perhaps a period of stern utilitarianism to form, as it were, the fallow of the arts before the new seed could be sown.

Both as regards art and history this was an important discovery. Undismayed by their position of isolation from the life of the present, the leaders of this fresh renaissance set themselves to the stupendous task of taking up the link of historical art where the pedants of the older so-called renaissance had dropped it, and tried to prove that the mediæval style was capable of new life and fresh development, and that it could adapt itself to the needs of the nineteenth century. On the surface this hope of theirs seemed justified by the marvellous elasticity which the style showed

in the period of its real life. Nothing was too great or too little, too commonplace or too sublime for its inclusive embrace; no change dismayed it, no violence seriously checked it; in those older days it was a part of the life of man, the universal, indispensable expression of his joys and sorrows. Could it not be so again? we thought; had not the fallow of the arts lasted long enough? Were the rows of square brown brick boxes which Keats and Shelley had to look on, or the stuccoed villa which enshrined Tennyson's genius, to be the perpetual concomitants of such masters of verbal beauty; was no beauty but the beauty of words to be produced by man in our times; was the intelligence of the age to be for ever so preposterously lop-sided? We could see no reason for it, and accordingly our hope was strong; for though we had learned something of the art and history of the Middle Ages, we had not learned enough. It became the fashion amongst the hopeful artists of the time I am thinking of to say that in order to have beautiful surroundings there was no need to alter any of the conditions and manners of our epoch; that an easy chair, a piano, a steam-engine, a billiard-table, or a hall fit for the meeting of the House of Commons, had nothing essential in them which compelled us to make them ugly, and that if they had existed in the Middle Ages the people of the time would have made them beautiful. Which certainly had an element of truth in it, but was not all the truth. It was indeed true that the mediæval instinct for beauty would have exercised itself on whatsoever fell to its lot to do, but it was also true that the life of the times did not put into the hands of the workman any object which was merely utilitarian, still less vulgar; whereas the life of modern times forces on him the production of many things which can be nothing but utilitarian, as for instance a steam-engine; and of many things in which vulgarity is innate and inevitable, as a gentleman's club-house or the ceremonial of our modern bureaucratic monarchy. Anyhow, this period of fresh hope and partial insight produced many interesting buildings and other works of art, and afforded a pleasant

time indeed to the hopeful but very small minority engaged in it, in spite of all vexations and disappointments. At last one man, who had done more than any one else to make this hopeful time possible, drew a line sternly through these hopes founded on imperfect knowledge. This man was John Ruskin. By a marvellous inspiration of genius (I can call it nothing else) he attained at one leap to a true conception of mediæval art which years of minute study had not gained for others. In his chapter in "The Stones of Venice," entitled "On the Nature of Gothic, and the Function of the Workman therein," he showed us the gulf which lay between us and the Middle Ages. From that time all was changed; ignorance of the spirit of the Middle Ages was henceforth impossible, except to those who wilfully shut their eyes. The aims of the new revival of art grew to be infinitely greater than they had been in those who did not give up all aim, as I fear many did. From that time forth those who could not learn the new knowledge were doomed to become pedants, differing only in the externals of the art they practised or were interested in from the unhistorical big-wigs of the eighteenth century. Yet the essence of what Ruskin then taught us was simple enough, like all great discoveries. It was really nothing more recondite than this, that the art of any epoch must of necessity be the expression of its social life, and that the social life of the Middle Ages allowed the workman freedom of individual expression, which on the other hand our social life forbids him.

I do not say that the change in the Gothic revivalists produced by this discovery was sudden, but it was effective. It has gradually sunk deep into the intelligence of the art and literature of to-day, and has had a great deal to do with the sundering of the highest culture (if one must use that ugly word) into a peculiarly base form of cynicism on the one hand, and into practical and helpful altruism on the other. The course taken by the Gothic revival in architecture, which, as aforesaid, is the outward manifestation of the Romantic school generally, shows decided tokens of the growing con-

sciousness of the essential difference between our society and that of the Middle Ages. When our architects and archæologists first mastered, as they supposed, the practice and principles of Gothic art, and began the attempt to reintroduce it as a universal style, they came to the conclusion that they were bound to take it up at the period when it hung balanced between completion and the very first beginnings of degradation. The end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century was the time they chose as that best fitted for the foundation of the Neo-Gothic style, which they hoped was destined to conquer the world; and in choosing this period on the verge of transition they showed remarkable insight and appreciation of the qualities of the style. It had by that time assimilated to itself whatever it could use of classical art, mingled with the various elements gathered from the barbaric ancient monarchies and the northern tribes, while for itself it had no consciousness of them, nor was in any way trammelled by them; it was flexible to a degree yet undreamed of in any previous style of architecture, and had no difficulties in dealing with any useful purpose, any material or climate; and with all this it was undeniably and frankly beautiful, cumbered by no rudeness, and degraded by no whim. The hand and the mind of man, one would think, can carry loveliness (a loveliness, too, that never cloys) no further than in the architectural works of that period, as for instance in the choir and transepts of Westminster Abbey before it had suffered from degradations of later days, which truly make one stand aghast at the pitch of perversity which men can reach at times. It must be remembered too, in estimating the judgment of the Neo-Gothic architects, that the half-century from 1280 to 1320 was the blossoming-time of architecture all over that part of the world which had held fast to historical continuity; and the East as well as the West produced its loveliest works of ornament and art at that period. This development, moreover, was synchronous with the highest point of the purely mediæval organization of industry. By that time the Gild-merchants and Lineages

of the free towns, which had grown aristocratic, exclusive, and divorced from actual labour, had had to yield to the craft-gilds, democratic bodies of actual workmen, which had now taken the position that they had long striven for, and were the masters of all industry. It was not the monasteries, as we used to be told, which were the hives of the art of the fourteenth century, but the free towns with their crafts organized for battle as well as craftsmanship; not the reactionary but the progressive part of the society of the time.

This central period therefore of the Gothic style, which expressed the full development of the social system of the Middle Ages, was undoubtedly the fittest period to choose for the tree on which to graft the young plant of Neo-Gothic; and at the time of which I am now thinking every architect of promise would have repudiated with scorn the suggestion that he should use any later or impurer style for the works he had to carry out. Indeed there was a tendency, natural enough, to undervalue the qualities of the later forms of Gothic, a tendency which was often carried to grotesque extremes, and the semi-Gothic survivals of the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries were looked on with mere contempt, in theory at least. But as time passed and the revivalists began to recognize, whether they would or no, the impossibility of bridging the gulf between the fourteenth and the nineteenth centuries; as in spite of their brilliant individual successes they found themselves compelled to admit that the Neo-Gothic graft refused to grow in the commercial air of the Victorian era; as they toiled conscientiously and wearily to reconcile the Podsnappery of modern London with the expression of the life of Simon de Montfort and Philip van Artevelde, they discovered that they had pitched their note too high, and must try again, or give up the game altogether. By that time they had thoroughly learned the merits of the later Gothic styles, and even of the style which in England at least (as in literature so in art) had retained some of the beauty and fitness of the palmy days of Gothic amidst

the conceits, artificialities, and euphuism of the time of Elizabeth and James the First; nay, they began to overvalue the remains of the inferior styles, not through pedantry, but rather perhaps from sympathy with the course of history, and repulsion from the pessimism which narrows the period of high aspirations and pleasure in life to the standard of our own passing moods. In the main, however, they were moved in this direction by the hope of finding another standpoint for the new and living style which they still hoped to set on foot; the elasticity and adaptability of the style of the fifteenth century, of which every village church in England gives us examples, and the great mass of the work achieved by it, in domestic as well as church architecture, ready to hand for study, as well as the half-conscious feeling of its being nearer to our own times and expressing a gradually-growing complexity of society, captivated the revivalists with a fresh hope. The dream of beauty and romance of the fourteenth century was gone; might not the more work-a-day "Perpendicular" give us a chance for the housing of Mr. Podsnap's respectability and counting-house, and bosom-of-the-family, and Sunday worship, without too manifest an absurdity?

So the architects began on the fifteenth-century forms, and as by this time they had gained more and more knowledge of mediæval aims and methods, they turned out better and better work; but still the new living style would not come. The Neo-Gothic in the fourteenth-century style was often a fair rendering of its original; the fifteenth-century rendering has been often really good, and not seldom has had an air of originality about it that makes one admire the capacity and delicate taste of its designers; but nothing comes of it; it is all hung in the air, so to say. London has not begun to look like a fifteenth-century city, and no flavour of beauty or even of generous building has begun to make itself felt in the numberless houses built in the suburbs.

Meantime from the fifteenth century we have sunk by a natural process to imitating something later yet, something so much nearer our own time and our own manners and

ways of life, that a success might have been expected to come out of this at least. The brick style in vogue in the time of William the Third and Queen Anne is surely not too sublime for general use; even Podsnap might acknowledge a certain amount of kinship with the knee-breeched, cocked-hatted bourgeois of that period; might not the graft of the new style begin to grow now, when we have abandoned the Gothic altogether, and taken to a style that belongs to the period of the workshop and division of labour, a period when all that was left of the craft-gilds was the corruption of them, the mere abuses of the close corporations and companies under whose restrictions of labour the commercial class chafed so sorely, and which they were on the point of sweeping away entirely?

Well, it is true that at first sight the Queen Anne development has seemed to conquer modern taste more or less; but in truth it is only the barest shadow of it which has done so. The turn that some of our vigorous young architects (they were young then) took towards this latest of all domestic styles can be accounted for without quarrelling with their good taste or good sense. In truth, with the best of them it was not the differentia of the Queen Anne style that was the attraction; all that is a mere bundle of preposterous whims; it was the fact that in the style there was yet left some feeling of the Gothic, at least in places or under circumstances where the buildings were remote from the progressive side of the eighteenth century. There I say some of the Gothic feeling was left, joined to forms, such as sash windows, yet possible to be used in our own times. The architects in search of a style might well say: "We have been driven from ditch to ditch; cannot we yet make a stand? The unapproachable grace and loveliness of the fourteenth century is hull down behind us, the fifteenth-century work is too delicate and too rich for the commonplace of to-day; let us be humble, and begin once more with the style of well-constructed, fairly proportioned brick houses which stand London smoke well, and look snug and comfortable at some village end, or amidst the green

trees of a squire's park. Besides, our needs as architects are not great; we don't want to build churches any more; the nobility have their palaces in town and country already" (I wish them joy of some of them!); "the working man cannot afford to live in anything that an architect could design; moderate-sized rabbit-warrens for rich middle-class men, and small ditto for the hanger-on groups to which we belong, is all we have to think of. Perhaps something of a style might arise amongst us from these lowly beginnings, though indeed we have come down a weary long way from Pugin's 'Contrasts.' We agree with him still, but we are driven to admire and imitate some of the very things he cursed, with our enthusiastic approbation." Well, a goodish many houses of this sort have been built, to the great comfort of the dwellers in them, I am sure; but the new style is so far from getting under way, that while on the other hand the ordinary builder is covering England with abortions which make us regret the brick box and slate lid of fifty years ago, the cultivated classes are rather inclined to return to the severity (that is to say, the unmitigated expensive ugliness) of the last dregs of would-be Palladian, as exemplified in the stone lumps of the Georgian period. Indeed I have not heard that the "educated middle classes" had any intention of holding a riotous meeting on the adjacent Trafalgar Square to protest against the carrying out of the designs for the new public offices which the Aedileship of Mr. Shaw-Lefevre threatened us with. As to public buildings, Mr. Street's Law Courts are the last attempt we are likely to see of producing anything reasonable or beautiful for that use; the public has resigned itself to any mass of dulness and vulgarity that it may be convenient for a department to impose upon it, probably from a half-conscious impression that at all events it will be good enough for the work (so-called) which will be done in it.

In short we must answer the question with which this paper began by saying that the architectural revival, though not a mere piece of artificial nonsense, is too limited in its scope, too much confined to an educated group, to be a vital

growth capable of true development. The important fact in it is that it is founded on the sympathy for history and the art of historical generalization, which, as aforesaid, is a gift of our epoch, but unhappily a gift in which few as yet have a share. Among populations where this gift is absent, not even scattered attempts at beauty in architecture are now possible, and in such places generations may live and die, if society as at present constituted endures, without feeling any craving for beauty in their daily lives; and even under the most favourable circumstances there is no general impulse born out of necessity towards beauty, which impulse alone can produce a universal architectural style, that is to say, a habit of elevating and beautifying the houses, furniture, and other material surroundings of our life.

All we have that approaches architecture is the result of a quite self-conscious and very laborious eclecticism, and is avowedly imitative of the work of past times, of which we have gained a knowledge far surpassing that of any other period. Meanwhile whatever is done without conscious effort, that is to say the work of the true style of the epoch, is an offence to the sense of beauty and fitness, and is admitted to be so by all men who have any perception of beauty of form. It is no longer passively but actively ugly, since it has added to the dreary utilitarianism of the days of Dr. Johnson a vulgarity which is the special invention of the Victorian era. The genuine style of that era is exemplified in the jerry-built houses of our suburbs, the stuccoed marine-parades of our watering-places, the flaunting corner public-houses of every town in Great Britain, the raw-boned hideousness of the houses that mar the glorious scenery of the Queen's Park at Edinburgh. These form our true Victorian architecture. Such works as Mr. Bodley's excellent new buildings at Magdalen College, Mr. Norman Shaw's elegantly fantastic Queen Anne houses at Chelsea, or Mr. Robson's simple but striking London board-schools, are mere eccentricities with which the public in general has no part or lot.

This is stark pessimism, my readers may say. Far from it. The enthusiam of the Gothic revivalists died out when they were confronted by the fact that they form part of a society which will not and cannot have a living style, because it is an economical necessity for its existence that the ordinary everyday work of its population shall be mechanical drudgery; and because it is the harmony of the ordinary everyday work of the population which produces Gothic, that is, living architectural art, and mechanical drudgery cannot be harmonized into art. The hope of our ignorance has passed away, but it has given place to the hope born of fresh knowledge. History taught us the evolution of architecture, it is now teaching us the evolution of society; and it is clear to us, and even to many who refuse to acknowledge it, that the society which is developing out of ours will not need or endure mechanical drudgery as the lot of the general population; that the new society will not be hag-ridden as we are by the necessity for producing ever more and more market-wares for a profit, whether any one needs them or not; that it will produce to live, and not live to produce, as we do. Under such conditions architecture, as a part of the life of people in general, will again become possible, and I believe that when it is possible, it will have a real new birth, and add so much to the pleasure of life that we shall wonder how people were ever able to live without it. Meantime we are waiting for that new development of society, some of us in cowardly inaction, some of us amidst hopeful work towards the change; but at least we are all waiting for what must be the work, not of the leisure and taste of a few scholars, authors, and artists, but of the necessities and aspirations of the workmen throughout the civilized world.

THE REVIVAL OF HANDICRAFT. AN ARTICLE IN THE "FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW," NOVEMBER 1888.

FOR some time past there has been a good deal of interest shown in what is called in our modern slang Art Workmanship, and quite recently there has been a growing feeling that this art workmanship to be of any value must have some of the workman's individuality imparted to it beside whatever of art it may have got from the design of the artist who has planned, but not executed the work. This feeling has gone so far that there is growing up a fashion for demanding handmade goods even when they are not ornamented in any way, as, for instance, woollen and linen cloth spun by hand and woven without power, hand-knitted hosiery, and the like. Nay, it is not uncommon to hear regrets for the hand-labour in the fields, now fast disappearing from even backward districts of civilized countries. The scythe, the sickle, and even the flail are lamented over, and many are looking forward with drooping spirits to the time when the hand-plough will be as completely extinct as the quern, and the rattle of the steam-engine will take the place of the whistle of the curly-headed ploughboy through all the length and breadth of the land. People interested, or who suppose that they are interested, in the details of the arts of life feel a desire to revert to methods of handicraft for production in general; and it may therefore be worth considering how far this is a mere reactionary sentiment incapable of realization, and how far it may foreshadow a real coming change in our habits of life as irresistible as the former change which has produced the system of machine-production, the system against which revolt is now attempted.

In this paper I propose to confine the aforesaid consideration as much as I can to the effect of machinery *versus* handicraft upon the arts; using that latter word as widely as possible, so as to include all products of labour which have

any claims to be considered beautiful. I say as far as possible: for as all roads lead to Rome, so the life, habits, and aspirations of all groups and classes of the community are founded on the economical conditions under which the mass of the people live, and it is impossible to exclude socio-political questions from the consideration of æsthetics. Also, although I must avow myself a sharer in the above-mentioned reactionary regrets, I must at the outset disclaim the mere æsthetic point of view which looks upon the ploughman and his bullocks and his plough, the reaper, his work, his wife, and his dinner, as so many elements which compose a pretty tapestry hanging, fit to adorn the study of a contemplative person of cultivation, but which it is not worth while differentiating from each other except in so far as they are related to the beauty and interest of the picture. On the contrary, what I wish for is that the reaper and his wife should have themselves a due share in all the fulness of life; and I can, without any great effort, perceive the justice of their forcing me to bear part of the burden of its deficiencies, so that we may together be forced to attempt to remedy them, and have no very heavy burden to carry between us.

To return to our æsthetics: though a certain part of the cultivated classes of to-day regret the disappearance of handicraft from production, they are quite vague as to how and why it is disappearing, and as to how and why it should or may reappear. For to begin with the general public is grossly ignorant of all the methods and processes of manufacture. This is of course one result of the machine-system we are considering. Almost all goods are made apart from the life of those who use them; we are not responsible for them, our will has had no part in their production, except so far as we form a part of the market on which they can be forced for the profit of the capitalist whose money is employed in producing them. The market assumes that certain wares are wanted; it produces such wares, indeed, but their kind and quality are only adapted to the needs of the public in a very rough fashion, because the public needs are subordinated to the

interest of the capitalist masters of the market, and they can force the public to put up with the less desirable article if they choose, as they generally do. The result is that in this direction our boasted individuality is a sham; and persons who wish for anything that deviates ever so little from the beaten path have either to wear away their lives in a wearisome and mostly futile contest with a stupendous organization which disregards their wishes, or to allow those wishes to be crushed out for the sake of a quiet life.

Let us take a few trivial but undeniable examples. You want a hat, say, like that you wore last year; you go to the hatter's, and find you cannot get it there, and you have no resource but in submission. Money by itself won't buy you the hat you want; it will cost you three months' hard labour and twenty pounds to have an inch added to the brim of your wideawake; for you will have to get hold of a small capitalist (of whom but few are left), and by a series of intrigues and resolute actions which would make material for a three-volume novel, get him to allow you to turn one of his hands into a handicraftsman for the occasion; and a very poor handicraftsman he will be, when all is said. Again, I carry a walking-stick, and like all sensible persons like it to have a good heavy end that will swing out well before me. A year or two ago it became the fashion to pare away all walking-sticks to the shape of attenuated carrots, and I really believe I shortened my life in my attempts at getting a reasonable staff of the kind I was used to, so difficult it was. Again, you want a piece of furniture, which the trade (mark the word, Trade, not Craft!) turns out blotched over with idiotic sham ornament; you wish to dispense with this degradation, and propose it to your upholsterer, who grudgingly assents to it; and you find that you have to pay the price of two pieces of furniture for the privilege of indulging your whim of leaving out the trade finish (I decline to call it ornament) on the one you have got made for you. And this is because it has been made by handicraft instead of machinery. For most people, therefore, there is a prohibitive price put

upon the acquirement of the knowledge of methods and processes. We do not know how a piece of goods is made, what the difficulties are that beset its manufacture, what it ought to look like, feel like, smell like, or what it ought to cost apart from the profit of the middleman. We have lost the art of marketing, and with it the due sympathy with the life of the workshop, which would, if it existed, be such a wholesome check on the humbug of party politics.

It is a natural consequence of this ignorance of the methods of making wares, that even those who are in revolt against the tyranny of the excess of division of labour in the occupations of life, and who wish to recur more or less to handicraft, should also be ignorant of what that life of handicraft was when all wares were made by handicraft. If their revolt is to carry any hope with it, it is necessary that they should know something of this. I must assume that many or perhaps most of my readers are not acquainted with Socialist literature, and that few of them have read the admirable account of the different epochs of production given in Karl Marx' great work entitled "Capital." I must ask to be excused, therefore, for stating very briefly what, chiefly owing to Marx, has become a commonplace of Socialism, but is not generally known outside it. There have been three great epochs of production since the beginning of the Middle Ages. During the first or mediæval period all production was individualistic in method; for though the workmen were combined into great associations for protection and the organization of labour, they were so associated as citizens, not as mere workmen. There was little or no division of labour, and what machinery was used was simply of the nature of a multiplied tool, a help to the workman's hand-labour and not a supplanter of it. The workman worked for himself and not for any capitalistic employer, and he was accordingly master of his work and his time; this was the period of pure handicraft. When in the latter half of the sixteenth century the capitalist employer and the so-called free workman began to appear, the workmen were

collected into workshops, the old tool-machines were improved, and at last a new invention, the division of labour, found its way into the workshops. The division of labour went on growing throughout the seventeenth century, and was perfected in the eighteenth, when the unit of labour became a group and not a single man; or in other words the workman became a mere part of a machine composed sometimes wholly of human beings and sometimes of human beings plus labour-saving machines, which towards the end of this period were being copiously invented; the fly-shuttle may be taken for an example of these. The latter half of the eighteenth century saw the beginning of the last epoch of production that the world has known, that of the automatic machine which supersedes hand-labour, and turns the workman who was once a handicraftsman helped by tools, and next a part of a machine, into a tender of machines. And as far as we can see, the revolution in this direction as to kind is complete, though as to degree, as pointed out by Mr. David A. Wells last year (1887), the tendency is towards the displacement of ever more and more "muscular" labour, as Mr. Wells calls it.

This is very briefly the history of the evolution of industry during the last five hundred years; and the question now comes: Are we justified in wishing that handicraft may in its turn supplant machinery? Or it would perhaps be better to put the question in another way: Will the period of machinery evolve itself into a fresh period of machinery more independent of human labour than anything we can conceive of now, or will it develop its contradictory in the shape of a new and improved period of production by handicraft? The second form of the question is the preferable one, because it helps us to give a reasonable answer to what people who have any interest in external beauty will certainly ask: Is the change from handicraft to machinery good or bad? And the answer to that question is to my mind that, as my friend Belfort Bax has put it, statically it is bad, dynamically it is good. As a condition of life, production by

machinery is altogether an evil; as an instrument for forcing on us better conditions of life it has been, and for some time yet will be, indispensable.

Having thus tried to clear myself of mere reactionary pessimism, let me attempt to show why statically handicraft is to my mind desirable, and its destruction a degradation of life. Well, first I shall not shrink from saying bluntly that production by machinery necessarily results in utilitarian ugliness in everything which the labour of man deals with, and that this is a serious evil and a degradation of human life. So clearly is this the fact that though few people will venture to deny the latter part of the proposition, yet in their hearts the greater part of cultivated civilized persons do not regard it as an evil, because their degradation has already gone so far that they cannot, in what concerns the sense of seeing, discriminate between beauty and ugliness: their languid assent to the desirableness of beauty is with them only a convention, a superstitious survival from the times when beauty was a necessity to all men. The first part of the proposition (that machine-industry produces ugliness) I cannot argue with these persons, because they neither know, nor care for, the difference between beauty and ugliness; and with those who do understand what beauty means I need not argue it, as they are but too familiar with the fact that the produce of all modern industrialism is ugly, and that whenever anything which is old disappears, its place is taken by something inferior to it in beauty; and that even out in the very fields and open country. The art of making beautifully all kinds of ordinary things, carts, gates, fences, boats, bowls, and so forth, let alone houses and public buildings, unconsciously and without effort, has gone; when anything has to be renewed among these simple things the only question asked is how little it can be done for, so as to tide us over our responsibility and shift its mending on to the next generation.

It may be said, and indeed I have heard it said, that since there is some beauty still left in the world and some people

who admire it, there is a certain gain in the acknowledged eclecticism of the present day, since the ugliness which is so common affords a contrast whereby the beauty, which is so rare, may be appreciated. This I suspect to be only another form of the maxim which is the sheet-anchor of the laziest and most cowardly group of our cultivated classes, that it is good for the many to suffer for the few; but if any one puts forward in good faith the fear that we may be too happy in the possession of pleasant surroundings, so that we shall not be able to enjoy them, I must answer that this seems to me a very remote terror. Even when the tide at last turns in the direction of sweeping away modern squalor and vulgarity, we shall have, I doubt, many generations of effort in perfecting the transformation, and when it is at last complete, there will be first the triumph of our success to exalt us, and next the history of the long wade through the putrid sea of ugliness which we shall have at last escaped from. But furthermore, the proper answer to this objection lies deeper than this. It is to my mind that very consciousness of the production of beauty for beauty's sake which we want to avoid; it is just what is apt to produce affectation and effeminacy amongst the artists and their following. In the great times of art conscious effort was used to produce great works for the glory of the City, the triumph of the Church, the exaltation of the citizens, the quickening of the devotion of the faithful; even in the higher art, the record of history, the instruction of men alive and to live hereafter, was the aim rather than beauty; and the lesser art was unconscious and spontaneous, and did not in any way interfere with the rougher business of life, while it enabled men in general to understand and sympathize with the nobler forms of art. But unconscious as these producers of ordinary beauty may be, they will not and cannot fail to receive pleasure from the exercise of their work under these conditions, and this above all things is that which influences me most in my hope for the recovery of handicraft. I have said it often enough, but I must say it once again, since it is so much a part of my case for

handicraft, that so long as man allows his daily work to be mere unrelieved drudgery he will seek happiness in vain. I say further that the worst tyrants of the days of violence were but feeble tormentors compared with those Captains of Industry who have taken the pleasure of work away from the workmen. Furthermore I feel absolutely certain that handicraft joined to certain other conditions, of which more presently, would produce the beauty and the pleasure in work above mentioned; and if that be so, and this double pleasure of lovely surroundings and happy work could take the place of the double torment of squalid surroundings and wretched drudgery, have we not good reason for wishing, if it might be, that handicraft should once more step into the place of machine-production?

I am not blind to the tremendous change which this revolution would mean. The maxim of modern civilization to a well-to-do man is, Avoid taking trouble! Get as many of the functions of your life as you can performed by others for you! Vicarious life is the watchword of our civilization, and we well-to-do and cultivated people live smoothly enough while it lasts. But, in the first place, how about the vicars, who do more for us than the singing of mass for our behoof for a scanty stipend? Will they go on with it for ever? For indeed the shuffling off of responsibilities from one to the other has to stop at last, and somebody has to bear the burden in the end. But let that pass, since I am not writing politics, and let us consider another aspect of the matter. What wretched lop-sided creatures we are being made by the excess of the division of labour in the occupations of life! What on earth are we going to do with our time when we have brought the art of vicarious life to perfection, having first complicated the question by the ceaseless creation of artificial wants which we refuse to supply for ourselves? Are all of us (we of the great middle class I mean) going to turn philosophers, poets, essayists—men of genius, in a word, when we have come to look down on the ordinary functions of life with the same kind of contempt wherewith persons of

good breeding look down upon a good dinner, eating it sedulously however? I shudder when I think of how we shall bore each other when we have reached that perfection. Nay, I think we have already got in all branches of culture rather more geniuses than we can comfortably bear, and that we lack, so to say, audiences rather than preachers. I must ask pardon of my readers; but our case is at once so grievous and so absurd that one can scarcely help laughing out of bitterness of soul. In the very midst of our pessimism we are boastful of our wisdom, yet we are helpless in the face of the necessities we have created, and which, in spite of our anxiety about art, are at present driving us into luxury unredeemed by beauty on the one hand, and squalor unrelieved by incident or romance on the other, and will one day drive us into mere ruin.

Yes, we do sorely need a system of production which will give us beautiful surroundings and pleasant occupation, and which will tend to make us good human animals, able to do something for ourselves, so that we may be generally intelligent instead of dividing ourselves into dull drudges or duller pleasure-seekers according to our class, on the one hand, or hapless pessimistic intellectual personages, and pretenders to that dignity, on the other. We do most certainly need happiness in our daily work, content in our daily rest; and all this cannot be if we hand over the whole responsibility of the details of our daily life to machines and their drivers. We are right to long for intelligent handicraft to come back to the world which it once made tolerable amidst war and turmoil and uncertainty of life, and which it should, one would think, make happy now we have grown so peaceful, so considerate of each other's temporal welfare.

Then comes the question, How can the change be made? And here at once we are met by the difficulty that the sickness and death of handicraft is, it seems, a natural expression of the tendency of the age. We willed the end, and therefore the means also. Since the last days of the Middle Ages the creation of an intellectual aristocracy has been, so

to say, the spiritual purpose of civilization side by side with its material purpose of supplanting the aristocracy of status by the aristocracy of wealth. Part of the price it has had to pay for its success in that purpose (and some would say it is comparatively an insignificant part) is that this new aristocracy of intellect has been compelled to forgo the lively interest in the beauty and romance of life, which was once the portion of every artificer at least, if not of every workman, and to live surrounded by an ugly vulgarity which the world amidst all its changes has not known till modern times. It is not strange that until recently it has not been conscious of this degradation; but it may seem strange to many that it has now grown partially conscious of it. It is common now to hear people say of such and such a piece of country or suburb: "Ah! it was so beautiful a year or so ago, but it has been quite spoilt by the building." Forty years back the building would have been looked on as a vast improvement; now we have grown conscious of the hideousness we are creating, and we go on creating it. We see the price we have paid for our aristocracy of intellect, and even that aristocracy itself is more than half regretful of the bargain, and would be glad if it could keep the gain and not pay the full price for it. Hence not only the empty grumbling about the continuous march of machinery over dying handicraft, but also various elegant little schemes for trying to withdraw ourselves, some of us, from the consequences (in this direction) of our being superior persons; none of which can have more than a temporary and very limited success. The great wave of commercial necessity will sweep away all these well-meant attempts to stem it, and think little of what it has done, or whither it is going.

Yet after all even these feeble manifestations of discontent with the tyranny of commerce are tokens of a revolutionary epoch, and to me it is inconceivable that machine-production will develop into mere infinity of machinery, or life wholly lapse into a disregard of life as it passes. It is true indeed that powerful as the cultivated middle class is,

it has not the power of re-creating the beauty and romance of life; but that will be the work of the new society which the blind progress of commercialism will create, nay, is creating. The cultivated middle class is a class of slave-holders, and its power of living according to its choice is limited by the necessity of finding constant livelihood and employment for the slaves who keep it alive. It is only a society of equals which can choose the life it will live, which can choose to forgo gross luxury and base utilitarianism in return for the unwearying pleasure of tasting the fulness of life. It is my firm belief that we shall in the end realize this society of equals, and also that when it is realized it will not endure a vicarious life by means of machinery; that it will in short be the master of its machinery and not the servant, as our age is.

Meantime, since we shall have to go through a long series of social and political events before we shall be free to choose how we shall live, we should welcome even the feeble protest which is now being made against the vulgarization of all life: first because it is one token amongst others of the sickness of modern civilization; and next, because it may help to keep alive memories of the past which are necessary elements of the life of the future, and methods of work which no society could afford to lose. In short, it may be said that though the movement towards the revival of handicraft is contemptible on the surface in face of the gigantic fabric of commercialism; yet, taken in conjunction with the general movement towards freedom of life for all, on which we are now surely embarked, as a protest against intellectual tyranny, and a token of the change which is transforming civilization into socialism, it is both noteworthy and encouraging.

ART AND ITS PRODUCERS. AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN LIVERPOOL BEFORE THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ART IN 1888.

I FEAR what I have to tell you will be looked upon by you as an often-told tale; but it seems to me that at the inception of an enterprise for the popularizing and furtherance of the arts of life, the subject-matter of my paper is very necessary to be considered. I will begin by putting before you a kind of text, from which I will speak, so that you may understand from the first the drift of my paper; a plan which, I hope, will save both your time and mine.

Whereas the incentive to labour is usually assumed to be the necessity of earning a livelihood, and whereas in our modern society this is really the only incentive amongst those of the working-class who produce wares of which some form of art is supposed to form a part, it is impossible that men working in this manner should produce genuine works of art. Therefore it is desirable either that all pretence to art should be abandoned in the wares so made, and that art should be restricted to matters which have no other function to perform except their existence as works of art, such as pictures, sculpture, and the like; or else, that to the incentive of necessity to labour should be added the incentives of pleasure and interest in the work itself.

That is my text, and I am quite sure that you will find it necessary to consider its subject-matter very carefully if you are to do anything save talk about art: for which latter purpose works of art are not needed, since so many fine phrases have been invented in modern times which answer all the purpose of realities.

To put it in another way, the question I ask you is threefold. First, shall we pretend to produce architecture and the architectural arts without having the reality of them? Second, shall we give them up in despair or carelessness of having

the reality? Or, third, shall we set ourselves to have the reality? Art and its Producers

To adopt the first plan would show that we were too careless and hurried about life to trouble ourselves whether we were fools (and very tragical fools) or not. The adoption of the second would ticket us as very honest people, determined to be free from as many responsibilities as possible, even at the expense of living a dull and vacant life. If we adopt the third sincerely, we shall add very much to the trouble and responsibility of our lives, for a time at least, but also very much to their happiness. Therefore I am in favour of our adopting this third course.

In point of fact, though I have put the second one before you for the sake, I fear, of an appearance of logical fairness, I do not think we are free to adopt it consciously at present, though we may be driven to adopt it in the end. To-day I think only the two courses are open to us, of quietly accepting the pretence of an all-pervading art, which indeed pervades the advertising sheets and nothing else; or else of struggling for an art which shall really pervade our lives and make them happier. But since this, if we are in earnest about it, will involve a reconstruction of society, let us first see what these architectural arts really are, and whether they are worth all this trouble; because, if they are not, we had better go on as we are, and shut our eyes to the fact that we are compelled to be such fools as to pretend that we want them when we do not.

The architectural arts, therefore, if they are anything real, mean the addition to all necessary articles of use of a certain portion of beauty and interest, which the user desires to have and the maker to make. Till within a comparatively recent period there has been no question whether this beauty and interest should form a part of wares; it always did do so without any definite order on the part of the user, and not necessarily consciously on the part of the maker; and the sham art which I have spoken of is simply the traditional survival of this reality; that is one reason why you cannot

clear yourselves of it in the simple and logical way that I put before you just now as the second course to be adopted.

But the integrity and sincerity of this architectural art, which, mind you, the workman works up with his wares not only because he must (for he is not conscious of compulsion in the matter) but because he likes to, though he is often not conscious of his pleasure—this real architectural art depends on the wares of which it forms a part being produced by craftsmanship, for the use of persons who understand craftsmanship. The user, the consumer, must choose his wares to be so and so, and the maker of them must agree with his choice. The fashion of them must not be forced on either the user or the maker; the two must be of one mind, and be capable under easily conceivable circumstances of exchanging their parts of user and maker. The carpenter makes a chest for the goldsmith one day, the goldsmith a cup for the carpenter on another, and there is sympathy in their work—that is, the carpenter makes for his goldsmith friend just such a chest as he himself would have if he needed a chest; the goldsmith's cup is exactly what he would make for himself if he needed one. Each is conscious during his work of making a thing to be used by a man of like needs to himself. I ask you to note these statements carefully, for I shall have to put a contrast to these conditions of work presently. Meantime observe that this question of ornamental or architectural art does not mean, as perhaps most people think it does, whether or not a certain amount of ornament or elegance shall be plastered on to a helpless, lifeless article of daily use—a house, a cup, a spoon, or what not. The chest and the cup, the house, or what not, may be as simple or as rude as you please, or as devoid of what is usually called ornament; but done in the spirit I have told you of, they will inevitably be works of art. In work so done there is and must be the interchange of interest in the occupations of life; the knowledge of human necessities and the consciousness of human good-will is a part of all such work, and the world is linked together by it. The peace of

the arts springs from its roots, and flourishes even in the midst of war and trouble and confusion. Art and its Producers

Now this is the architectural art which I urge you to think it worth your while to struggle for in all its reality. I firmly believe it is worth the struggle, however burdensome that may be. There are some things which are worth any cost; but above them all I value consciousness of manly life; and the arts form a part of this at least.

This, I say, is the theory of the conditions under which genuine architectural art can be produced; but that theory is founded on a view of the historical development of the industrial arts, and is not merely built up in the air. I must, therefore, now give a brief account of my historical position, although it has been so often done before, that it must be familiar to many, if not most of you. From the beginning of history down to the end of the Middle Ages there has been, as I have said, no question as to whether due form of art should accompany all wares intended to last for any time: this character of theirs did not in itself enhance their price or increase the conscious labour upon them, it was part of their nature to be so, they grew so like a plant grows; during all these ages wares had been made wholly by craftsmanship. It is true that in the ancient world the greater part of the production of wares was the work of chattel slaves, and though the condition of the artisan slaves was very different from that of the field-hands, yet their slavery has fixed its mark clearly enough on the minor arts of the period, in their severe, or literally servile subordination to the higher work done by artists. When chattel slavery passed away from Europe with the classical world and the Middle Ages were fairly born out of the Medean caldron of the confusion that followed: as soon as the formation of the gilds gave a rallying-point to the workmen, free and serf, of the day, those workmen, the makers of wares, became free in their work, whatever their political position was; and the architectural arts flourished to a degree unknown before, and at least a foretaste was given to the world of what the pleasure of life might be in a society

of equals. At this time craftsmanship reached its highest point: the avowed object of the craft-gilds, as may be gathered from the irrefragable evidence of their rules, was to distribute whatever work was to hand equitably amongst a society of pure handicraftsmen (we have translated the word now in order to give it a meaning exactly opposite to its original one) to check the very beginnings of capitalism and competition inside the gild, and at the same time to produce wares whose test should be the actual use, the real needs of the public of neighbours that was engaged in work carried on in a similar spirit. This manner of work, of producing for use and not for profit, bore its due fruit: as a matter of course, the wares made by the gildsmen of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries have mostly perished; even the most enduring of them, the buildings of their raising, have been either destroyed or degraded by the ignorance and intolerance, the frivolity and the pedantry of succeeding ages; but what is left us, mostly by sheer accident, is enough to teach us the lesson that no cultivation, no share in the science which has in these days subdued nature, as long as it is exterior to the working life of the workman, can supply the place of freedom of hand and thought during his working hours, and interest in the welfare of his work itself; and further, that the collective genius of a people working in free but harmonious co-operation is far more powerful for the production of architectural art than the spasmodic efforts of the greatest individual genius; because with the former the expression of life and pleasure is unforced and habitual, and directly connected with the traditions of the past, and consequently is as unfailing as the work of Nature herself.

But this society of workmen, this crown of labour of the Middle Ages, was doomed to a short life. Its tendency to equality was so completely extinguished by the development of the political element in which it lived, that the existence of it has been scarcely suspected before the rise of the school of historical criticism of our own days. Those who, perhaps unwittingly, are wont to trouble themselves about what

might have been, may consider the lesser causes that seem to have led to this change, and speculate on what would have happened if the Black Death had not half depopulated north-western Europe; if Philip van Artevelde and his bold Ghent-men had defeated the French chivalry at Rosebeque, as their fathers did at Courtray; if the stout yeomen of Kent and Essex, gathered on "the Fair-field at Mile-end," had had wits not quite so simple as to trust the young scoundrel of a king, who had just had their leader murdered under tryst, but had carried out the peasants' war to its due conclusion. Art and its Producers

All this is pleasant fooling, but it is little else. The gild-governed industry must in any case have come to an end as soon as the general longing for new knowledge, greater command over nature, and greater hurry of life, had grown strong enough to force on the next development of productive labour. The gilds were incapable of the necessary expansion then called for, and they had to disappear, after having contributed largely to the death of the feudal hierarchy and given birth to the middle-classes, which took its place as the dominant force in Europe. Capitalism began to grow up within the gilds, the journeyman, the so-called free-labourer, began to appear in them; and outside them, notably in this country, the land of the country began to be cultivated for the profit of the capitalistic farmer instead of the livelihood of the peasant, and the system of production was created which was needed for carrying on modern society—the society of contract, instead of the society of status. It was essential to this system that the free-labourer should be no longer free in his work; he must be furnished with a master having complete control of that work, as a consequence of his owning the raw material and tools of labour; and with an universal market for the sale of the wares with which he had nothing to do directly, and the very existence of which he was unconscious of. He thus gradually ceased to be a craftsman, a man who in order to accomplish his work must necessarily take an interest in it, since he is responsible for making or marring the wares he has to do

with, and whose market was made up chiefly of neighbours, men whose needs he could understand. Instead of a craftsman he must now become a "hand," responsible for nothing but carrying out the orders of his foreman. In his leisure hours an intelligent citizen (perhaps), with a capacity for understanding politics, or a turn for scientific knowledge, or what not, but in his working hours not even a machine, but an average portion of that great and almost miraculous machine—the factory; a man, the interest of whose life is divorced from the subject-matter of his labour, whose work has become "employment," that is, merely the opportunity of earning a livelihood at the will of some one else. Whatever interest still clings to the production of wares under this system has wholly left the ordinary workman, and attaches only to the organizers of his labour; and that interest commonly has little to do with the production of wares as things to be handled, looked at—used, in short, but simply as counters in the great game of the world-market. I fancy that there are not a few of the "manufacturers" in this great "manufacturing" district who would be horrified at the idea of using the wares which they "manufacture," and if they could be witnesses of the enthusiasm of the customers of the customers of their customers when those wares reached their final destination of use they would perhaps smile at it somewhat cynically.

In this brief account I have purposely left out the gradations by which we have reached the contrast between the craftsman of the Middle Ages and the free workman of to-day: between the productions of wares for direct use and their production as exchange-wares for the world-market. I want to lay before you the contrast as clearly as possible; but that I may meet objections, I ought to say that I am well aware that the process of transformation was gradual; that the new free labourer did not at first have to change his manner of work much; that the system of division of labour was brought to bear on him in the seventeenth century and

was perfected in the eighteenth, and that, as that system drew near to perfection, the invention of automatic machinery changed the workman's relation to his work once more, and turned him, in the great staple industries, into the tender of a machine instead of a machine (which I think was to him an advantage); but, on the other hand, brought almost all the surviving handicrafts that had hitherto escaped, under the sway of the system of division of labour, and thus for the time being abolished craftsmanship among the wage-earning classes. Craftsmanship is now all but extinct, except among the professional classes, who claim the position of gentlemen.

If we are in earnest in wishing to make the architectural or decorative arts a reality, we must face these facts as they regard the workman in the first place. But in order to be clear as to what the position of the workman, the producer of such wares, really is, we must also consider that of the consumer of them. For it will perhaps be said, if you desire the production of these wares, there is nothing necessary but to create a demand for them, and then they will come naturally, and once more transform the workman into a craftsman. Now, granted that such demand is genuine, and also wide enough, that is quite true; but then comes the question whether this genuine and wide demand can be created; and if it can be, how it is to be done?

Now, as the present system of production has transformed the handicraftsman into a machine without will, so it has turned the neighbour purchaser with good marketing faculties into a slave of the world-market—a purse. The motto of the modern commercialist being, not the market for man, but man for the market: the market is the master, the man the slave, which to my mind, is reversing the reasonable order of things. Let us see if that is not so. In the present day the great problem which we have to face is the due employment of human labour; if we fail in employing it in some fashion, it will eat us up to begin with, whatever it does after-

wards; if we fail to employ it duly we must at least expect to have nothing but a corrupt and degraded society; and for my part I wish we could turn our thoughts to employing labour duly, instead of employing it anyhow. But at any rate we are all practically driven to recognize the fact that, except for a few hundred thousands, who for anything we can do must starve or go to the workhouse, we must look to the employment of labour-power, that is, men. Now, I have said just now, and repeat it again with all the emphasis that I can, that the proper employers (or say customers) of the working men are the working men: and if they had no other customers, I should have perfect confidence that in the long run they would be employed in making nothing but useful things; among which, of course, I include works of art of various kinds: but as they have other customers, I have not that confidence, for I see, no one can fail to see, that they are employed in producing a great deal that is not useful, although it is marketable. They themselves are not as good customers to themselves as they should be, because they are not wealthy enough; all the wares which they consume must be of inferior quality for one thing, let alone their quantity; therefore their custom must be supplemented by that of the well-to-do and the rich classes, and these we will suppose are all of them wealthy enough to satisfy their needs for really desirable things, and they do so: other things the reasonable among them would not demand, if they could help themselves; but from what I can see round about me, I judge that they cannot help themselves. It seems that the market for gambling in profits is too exacting, or the need for the employment of labour is too pressing to allow them to purchase and consume only what they need; they must, in addition, purchase and consume many things which they do not need; habits of pomp and luxury must be formed amongst them, so that the market which would be starved by the misery of the poor, may be kept busy with ministering to the luxury of the rich. And you must understand that I mean here to assert that

though all wares made must be consumed, nevertheless that consumption does not prove their use: they may be used, or they may be wasted, and if they are not needed, they cannot be used and must be wasted. Art and its Producers

Here, then, in considering the possibility of the widespread and genuine demand for architectural art, we are met at the outset by this difficulty, that the workmen, who must be the producers of the art, are largely, I will say mostly, employed in wasting their labour in two ways; on the one hand, in making inferior wares, which their inferior position forces them to demand, and for which there ought to be no demand; and on the other, in making wares, not for the use, but for the waste of the rich classes, for which, again, there ought to be no demand. And these two haplessly false demands are forced on to both these classes, because they are forced into the position which so forces them. The world-market, which should be our servant, is our master, and ordains that so it must be. The wide and genuine demand, therefore, for the architectural arts which we have seen can only be produced by the handicraftsman, cannot be created under the present system of production, which, indeed, could not go on if the greater part of its wares were the work of handicraft.

We are driven at last, then, to this conclusion; that pleasure and interest in the work itself are necessary to the production of a work of art however humble; that this pleasure and interest can only be present when the workman is free in his work, i.e., is conscious of producing a piece of goods suitable to his own needs as a healthy man; that the present system of industrial production does not allow of the existence of such free workmen consciously producing wares for themselves and their neighbours, and forbids the general public to ask for wares made by such men; that, therefore, since neither the producers nor the users of wares are free to make or ask for wares according to their wills, we cannot under our present system of production have the reality of

the architectural arts which I have been urging you to strive for, but must put up with pretending to have them; which seems to me a rather sorry proceeding.

What can we do, then, in order to shake off this disgrace; in order that we may be free to say either that we want the ornaments of life, and no makeshifts of them shall content us; or that we do not want them, and will not have them?

If my premises are accepted the practical position is clear; we must try to change the system of the production of wares. To meet possible objections once more, I do not mean by this that we should aim at abolishing all machinery: I would do some things by machinery which are now done by hand, and other things by hand which are now done by machinery: in short, we should be the masters of our machines and not their slaves, as we are now. It is not this or that tangible steel and brass machine which we want to get rid of, but the great intangible machine of commercial tyranny, which oppresses the lives of all of us. Now, this enterprise of rebelling against commercialism I hold to be a thoroughly worthy one: remember what my text was, and how I said that our aim should be to add to the incentive of necessity for working, the incentive of pleasure and interest in the work itself. I am not pleading for the production of a little more beauty in the world, much as I love it, and much as I would sacrifice for its sake; it is the lives of human beings that I am pleading for; or if you will, with the Roman poet, the reasons for living. In this assembly there are perhaps only a few who can realize the meaning of the daily drudgery, hopeless of any result except the continuance of a life of drudgery, which is the lot of all but a few in our civilization; for indeed it is only possible to be realized by experience or strong imagination; but do your best to realize it, and then further to realize the result of turning those daily hours of hopeless toil into days of pleasant work, the happy exercise of manly energies, illuminated by the certainty of usefulness and the hope of applause from the friends and neighbours for whom it is exercised. Surely when you have thought of this seriously you will

once more have to admit that the attainment of such a change is worth almost any sacrifice. I say again, as I have often said, that if the world cannot hope to be happy in its work it must relinquish the hope of happiness altogether. Art and its Producers

Again, the aim of those who look on the popular arts seriously is, that we should be masters of our work, and be able to say what we will have and what we will do; and the price which we must pay for the attainment of that aim is, to speak quite plainly, the recasting of society. For that mechanical and tyrannous system of production which I have condemned is so intimately interwoven with the society of which we all form a part, that it sometimes shows as its cause, and sometimes as its effect, and is in any case a necessity to it; you cannot abolish the slums of our great cities; you cannot have happy villagers living in pretty houses among the trees, doing pretty-looking work in their own houses or in the pleasant village workshop between seed-time and harvest, unless you remove the causes that have made the brutal slum-dweller and the starveling field-labourer. All essential conditions of society, the growth of ages as they are, must bring about certain consequences which cannot be dealt with by mere palliation. The essentials of ancient society involved the chattel slave, those of mediæval society the serf, those of modern society the irresponsible wage-worker under a master; and the latter cannot by efforts from without be set to do work which does not belong to his condition of dependency on a master; the craftsman is responsible for his work, and a dependent cannot be responsible for anything save the fulfilment of the task set him by his master.

But lest you may think I show no course for you to take except striving, as I do, towards the conscious reconstruction of society on a basis of equality, I will say a word or two on work which may lie ready to our hands as artists rather than as citizens. There is a small body of men who are independent in their work, who are called by the name I have just used—artists: as a separate group they are the result of the commercial system which could not use independent work-

men, and their divorce from the ordinary production of wares is the obvious external cause of the sickness of the architectural arts. Anyhow, they exist as independent workmen, the loose screw in their position being that they do not work for the whole public, but for a very small portion of it, which rewards them for that exclusiveness by giving them the position of gentlemen. Now it seems to me that the only thing we can do, if we will not help in the reconstruction of society, is to deal with this group of gentlemen workmen. The non-gentlemen workmen are beyond our reach unless we look on the matter from the wider point of view, but we can try to get the artists to take an interest in those arts of life whose production at present is wholly in the hands of the irresponsible machines of the commercial system, and to understand that they, the artists, however great they may be, ought to be taking part in this production; while the workmen who are now machines ought to be artists, however humble. On the other hand we may try to dig up whatever of responsibility and independence lies half smothered under the compact clay of the factory system, to find out if there are not some persons in the employ of the commercial organizers who are artists, to give them opportunities if possible of working more directly for the public, and to win for them that applause and sympathy of their brother artists which every good workman naturally desires. The idea that this may and can be done is by no means mine alone; in putting it forward I represent not merely a vague hope that it may be attempted, but an actual enterprise in good working order. I have the honour to belong to a small and unpretentious society, of which Mr. Crane is President, which, under the name of the Arts and Crafts Society, has just carried out a successful exhibition of what are called "the applied arts" in London, with the definite intention of furthering the purpose I have just stated. To some of us such work may seem very petty and unheroic, especially if they have been lately brought face to face with the reckless hideousness and squalor of a great manufacturing district; or

have been so long living in the shabby hell of the great commercial centre of the world that it has entered into their life and they are now "used to it," that is, degraded to its miserable standard: but it is something to do at least, for it means keeping alive the spark of life in these architectural arts for a better day; which arts might otherwise be wholly extinguished by commercial production, a disaster which not many years ago seemed most likely to happen. But I think this lesser work will be so far from hindering us, that it will rather draw us on to engaging in the wider and deeper matter, and doing our best towards the realization of that Society of Equals, which, as I have already said, will form the only conditions under which true craftsmanship can be the rule of production; that form of work which involves the pleasurable exercise of our own energies, and the sympathy with the capacities and aspirations of our neighbours, that is, of humanity generally.

Art and its Producers

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS OF TO-DAY. AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN EDINBURGH BEFORE THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ART IN OCTOBER, 1889.

"APPLIED Art" is the title which the Society has chosen for that portion of the arts which I have to speak to you about. What are we to understand by that title? I should answer that what the Society means by applied art is the ornamental quality which men choose to add to articles of utility. Theoretically this ornament can be done without, and art would then cease to be "applied"—would exist as a kind of abstraction, I suppose. But though this ornament to articles of utility may be done without, man up to the present time has never done without it, and perhaps never will; at any rate he does not propose to do so at present, although, as we shall see presently, he has got himself into somewhat of a mess in regard to his application of art. Is it worth while for a moment or two considering why man has never thought of giving up work which adds to the labour necessary to provide him with food and shelter, and to satisfy his craving for some exercise of his intellect? I think it is, and that such consideration will help us in dealing with the important question which once more I must attempt to answer, "What is our position towards the applied arts in the present, and what have we to hope for them and from them in the future?"

Now I say without hesitation that the purpose of applying art to articles of utility is twofold: first, to add beauty to the results of the work of man, which would otherwise be ugly; and secondly, to add pleasure to the work itself, which would otherwise be painful and disgustful. If that be the case, we must cease to wonder that man should always have striven to ornament the work of his own hands, which he must needs see all round about him daily and hourly; or that he should have always striven to turn the pain of his labour into a pleasure wherever it seemed possible to him.

Now as to the first purpose: I have said that the produce of man's labour must be ugly if art be not applied to it, and I use the word ugly as the strongest plain word in the English language. For the works of man cannot show a mere negation of beauty; when they are not beautiful they are actively ugly, and are thereby degrading to our manlike qualities; and at last so degrading that we are not sensible of our degradation, and are therefore preparing ourselves for the next step downward. This active injury of non-artistic human work I want especially to fix in your minds; so I repeat again, if you dispense with applying art to articles of utility, you will not have unnoticeable utilities, but utilities which will bear with them the same sort of harm as blankets infected with the small-pox or the scarlet-fever, and every step in your material life and its "progress" will tend towards the intellectual death of the human race.

Of course you will understand that in speaking of the works of man, I do not forget that there are some of his most necessary labours to which he cannot apply art in the sense wherein we are using it; but that only means that Nature has taken the beautifying of them out of his hands; and in most of these cases the processes are beautiful in themselves if our stupidity did not add grief and anxiety to them. I mean that the course of the fishing-boat over the waves, the plough-share driving the furrow for next year's harvest, the June swathe, the shaving falling from the carpenter's plane, all such things are in themselves beautiful, and the practice of them would be delightful if man, even in these last days of civilization, had not been so stupid as to declare practically that such work (without which we should die in a few days) is the work of thralls and starvelings, whereas the work of destruction, strife, and confusion, is the work of the pick of the human race—gentlemen to wit.

But if these applied arts are necessary, as I believe they are, to prevent mankind from being a mere ugly and degraded blotch on the surface of the earth, which without him would certainly be beautiful, their other function of giving

pleasure to labour is at least as necessary, and, if the two functions can be separated, even more beneficent and indispensable. For if it be true, as I know it is, that the function of art is to make labour pleasurable, what is the position in which we must find ourselves without it? One of two miseries must happen to us: either the necessary work of our lives must be carried on by a miserable set of helots for the benefit of a few lofty intellects; or if, as we ought to do, we determine to spread fairly the burden of the curse of labour over the whole community, yet there the burden will be, spoiling for each one of us a large part of that sacred gift of life, every fragment of which, if we were wise, we should treasure up and make the most of (and allow others to do so) by using it for the pleasurable exercise of our energies, which is the only true source of happiness.

Let me call your attention to an analogy between the function of the applied arts and a gift of Nature without which the world would certainly be much unhappier, but which is so familiar to us that we have no proper single word for it, and must use a phrase; to wit, the pleasure of satisfying hunger. Appetite is the single word used for it, but is clearly vague and unspecific: let us use it, however, now we have agreed as to what we mean by it.

By the way, need I apologize for introducing so gross a subject as eating and drinking? Some of you perhaps will think I ought to, and are looking forward to the day when this function also will be civilized into the taking of some intensely concentrated pill once a year, or indeed once in a life-time, leaving us free for the rest of our time to the exercise of our intellect—if we chance to have any in those days. From this height of cultivated aspiration I respectfully beg to differ, and in all seriousness, and not in the least in the world as a joke, I say that the daily meeting of the house-mates in rest and kindness for this function of eating, this restoration of the waste of life, ought to be looked on as a kind of sacrament, and should be adorned by art to the best of our powers: and pray pardon me if

I say that the consciousness that there are so many people whose lives are so sordid, miserable, and anxious, that they cannot duly celebrate this sacrament, should be felt by those that can, as a burden to be shaken off by remedying the evil, and not by ignoring it. Well now, I say, that as eating would be dull work without appetite, or the pleasure of eating, so is the production of utilities dull work without art, or the pleasure of production; and that it is Nature herself who leads us to desire this pleasure, this sweetening of our daily toil. I am inclined to think that in the long-run mankind will find it indispensable; but if that turn out to be a false prophecy, all I can say is that mankind will have to find out some new pleasure to take its place, or life will become unendurable, and society impossible. Meantime it is reasonable and right that men should strive to make the useful wares which they produce beautiful just as Nature does; and that they should strive to make the making of them pleasant, just as Nature makes pleasant the exercise of the necessary functions of sentient beings. To apply art to useful wares, in short, is not frivolity, but a part of the serious business of life.

Now let us see in somewhat more detail what applied art deals with. I take it that it is only as a matter of convenience that we separate painting and sculpture from applied art: for in effect the synonym for applied art is architecture, and I should say that painting is of little use, and sculpture of less, except where their works form a part of architecture. A person with any architectural sense really always looks at any picture or any piece of sculpture from this point of view; even with the most abstract picture he is sure to think, How shall I frame it, and where shall I put it? As for sculpture, it becomes a mere toy, a tour de force, when it is not definitely a part of a building, executed for a certain height from the eye, and to be seen in a certain light. And if this be the case with works of art which can to a certain extent be abstracted from their surroundings, it is, of course, the case a fortiori with more subsidiary matters. In short, the complete work

of applied art, the true unit of the art, is a building with all its due ornament and furniture; and I must say from experience that it is impossible to ornament duly an ugly or base building. And on the other hand I am forced to say that the glorious art of good building is in itself so satisfying, that I have seen many a building that needed little ornament, wherein all that seemed needed for its complete enjoyment was some signs of sympathetic and happy use by human beings: a stout table, a few old-fashioned chairs, a pot of flowers will ornament the parlour of an old English yeoman's house far better than a wagon-load of Rubens will ornament a gallery in Blenheim Park.

Only remember that this forbearance, this restraint in beauty, is not by any means necessarily artless: where you come upon an old house that looks thus satisfactory, while no conscious modern artist has been at work there, the result is caused by unconscious unbroken tradition: in default of that, in will march that pestilential ugliness I told you of before, and with its loathsome pretence and hideous vulgarity will spoil the beauty of a Gothic house in Somersetshire, or the romance of a peel-tower on the edge of a Scotch loch; and to get back any of the beauty and romance (you will never get it all back) you will need a conscious artist of to-day, whose chief work, however, will be putting out the intrusive rubbish and using the white-washing brush freely.

Well, I repeat that the unit of the art I have to deal with is the dwelling of some group of people, well-built, beautiful, suitable to its purpose, and duly ornamented and furnished so as to express the kind of life which the inmates live. Or it may be some noble and splendid public building, built to last for ages, and it also duly ornamented so as to express the life and aspirations of the citizens: in itself a great piece of history of the efforts of the citizens to raise a house worthy of their noble lives, and its mere decoration an epic wrought for the pleasure and education, not of the present generation only, but of many generations to come. This is the true work of art—I was going to say of genuine civilization, but the word has been so misused that I will not

use it—the true work of art, the true masterpiece, of reasonable and manly men conscious of the bond of true society that makes everything each man does of importance to every one else.

This is, I say, the unit of the art, this house, this church, this town-hall, built and ornamented by the harmonious efforts of a free people: by no possibility could one man do it, however gifted he might be: even supposing the director or architect of it were a great painter and a great sculptor, an unfailing designer of metal work, of mosaic, of woven stuffs and the rest—though he may design all these things, he cannot execute them, and something of his genius must be in the other members of the great body that raises the complete work: millions on millions of strokes of hammer and chisel, of the gouge, of the brush, of the shuttle, are embodied in that work of art, and in every one of them is either intelligence to help the master, or stupidity to foil him hopelessly. The very masons laying day by day their due tale of rubble and ashlar may help him to fill the souls of all beholders with satisfaction, or may make his paper design a folly or a nullity. They and all the workmen engaged in the work will bring that disaster about in spite of the master's mighty genius, unless they are instinct with intelligent tradition; unless they have that tradition, whatever pretence of art there is in it will be worthless. But if they are working backed by intelligent tradition, their work is the expression of their harmonious co-operation and the pleasure which they took in it: no intelligence, even of the lowest kind, has been crushed in it, but rather subordinated and used, so that no one from the master designer downwards could say, This is my work, but every one could say truly, This is our work. Try to conceive, if you can, the mass of pleasure which the production of such a work of art would give to all concerned in making it, through years and years it may be (for such work cannot be hurried); and when made there it is for a perennial pleasure to the citizens, to look at, to use, to care for, from day to day and year to year.

Is this a mere dream of an idealist? No, not at all; such

works of art were once produced, when these islands had but a scanty population, leading a rough and to many (though not to me) a miserable life, with a "plentiful lack" of many, nay most, of the so-called comforts of civilization; in some such way have the famous buildings of the world been raised; but the full expression of this spirit of common and harmonious work is given only during the comparatively short period of the developed Middle Ages, the time of the completed combination of the workmen in the gilds of craft.

And now if you will allow me I will ask a question or two, and answer them myself.

1. Do we wish to have such works of art? I must answer that we here assembled certainly do, though I will not answer for the general public.

2. Why do we wish for them? Because (if you have followed me so far) their production would give pleasure to those that used them and those that made them: since if such works were done, all work would be beautiful and fitting for its purpose, and as a result most labour would cease to be burdensome.

3. Can we have them now as things go? Can the present British Empire, with all its power and all its intelligence, produce what the scanty, half-barbarous, superstitious, ignorant population of these islands produced with no apparent effort several centuries ago? No; as things go we cannot have them; no conceivable combination of talent and enthusiasm could produce them as things are.

Why? Well, you see, in the first place, we have been engaged for at least one century in loading the earth with huge masses of "utilitarian" buildings, which we cannot get rid of in a hurry; we must be housed, and there are our houses for us; and I have said you cannot ornament ugly houses. This is a bad hearing for us.

But supposing we pulled these utilitarian houses down, should we build them up again much better? I fear not, in spite of the considerable improvement in taste which has

taken place of late years, and of which this Congress is, I hope, an indication amongst others.

If the ugly utilitarian buildings abovesaid were pulled down, and we set about building others in their place, the new ones would assuredly be of two kinds: one kind would be still utilitarian in fact, though they might affect various degrees and kinds of ornamental style; and they would be at least as bad as those which they replaced, and in some respects would be worse than a good many of the older ones; would be flimsier in building, more tawdry, and more vulgar than those of the earlier utilitarian style. The other kind would be designed by skilful architects, men endowed with a sense of beauty, and educated in the history of past art, and they would doubtless be far better in form than the utilitarian abortions we have been speaking of; but they would lack the spirit of the older buildings of which I have spoken above. Let that pass for the moment. I will recur to it presently.

For one thing I am sure would immediately strike us in our city rebuilt at the end of the nineteenth century. The great mass of the building would be of the utilitarian kind, and only here and there would you find an example of the refined and careful work of the educated architects—the Eclectic style, if you will allow me so to call it. That is all our rebuilding would come to; we should be pretty much where we are now, except that we should have lost some solid straightforwardly ugly buildings, and gained a few elegantly eccentric ones, "not understanded of the people."

How is this? Well, the answer to that question will answer the "why" of a few sentences back.

The mass of our houses would be utilitarian and ugly even if we set about the work of housing ourselves anew, because tradition has at last brought us into the plight of being builders of base and degrading buildings, and when we want to build otherwise we must try to imitate work done by men whose traditions led them to build beautifully; which I must say is not a very hopeful job.

I said just now that those few refined buildings which might be raised in a rebuilding of our houses, or which, to drop hypothesis, are built pretty often now, would lack, or do lack, the spirit of the mediæval buildings I spoke of. Surely this is obvious: so far from being works of harmonious combination as effortless as any artistic work can be, they are, even when most successful, the result of a constant conflict with all the traditions of the time. As a rule the only person connected with a work of architecture who has any idea of what is wanted in it is the architect himself; and at every turn he has to correct and oppose the habits of the mason, the joiner, the cabinet-maker, the carver, etc., and to try to get them to imitate painfully the habits of the fourteenth-century workmen, and to lay aside their own habits, formed not only from their own personal daily practice, but from the inherited turn of mind and practice of body of more than two centuries at least. Under all these difficulties it would be nothing short of a miracle if those refined buildings did not proclaim their eclecticism to all beholders. Indeed, as it is, the ignorant stare at them wondering; fools of the Podsnap breed laugh at them; harsh critics pass unkind judgments on them. Don't let us be any of these: when all is said they do much credit to those who have designed them and carried them out in the teeth of such prodigious difficulties; they are often beautiful in their own eclectic manner: they are always meant to be so: shall we find fault with their designers for trying to make them different from the mass of Victorian architecture? If there was to be any attempt to make them beautiful, that difference, that eccentricity, was necessary. Let us praise their eccentricity and not deride it, we whose genuine tendency is to raise buildings which are a blot on the beautiful earth, an insult to the common sense of cultivated nineteenth-century humanity. Allow me a parenthesis here. When I look on a group of clean well-fed middle-class men of that queer mixed race that we have been in the habit of calling the Anglo-Saxon (whether they belong to the land on this side of the Atlantic

or the other); when I see these noble creatures, tall, wide-shouldered, and well-knit, with their bright eyes and well moulded features, these men full of courage, capacity, and energy, I have been astounded in considering the houses they have thought good enough for them, and the pettiness of the occupations which they have thought worthy of the exercise of their energies. To see a man of those inches, for example, bothering himself over the exact width of a stripe in some piece of printed cloth (which has nothing to do with its artistic needs) for fear it might not just hit the requirements of some remote market, tyrannized over by the whims of a languid creole or a fantastic negro, has given me a feeling of shame for my civilized middle-class fellow-man, who is regardless of the quality of the wares which he sells, but intensely anxious about the profits to be derived from them.

This parenthesis, to the subject of which I shall presently have to recur, leads me to note here that I have been speaking chiefly about architecture, because I look upon it, first as the foundation of all the arts, and next as an all-embracing art. All the furniture and ornament which goes to make up the complete unit of art, a properly ornamented dwelling, is in some degree or other beset with the difficulties which hamper nowadays the satisfactory accomplishment of good and beautiful building. The decorative painter, the mosaicist, the window-artist, the cabinet-maker, the paper-hanging-maker, the potter, the weaver, all these have to fight with the traditional tendency of the epoch in their attempt to produce beauty rather than marketable finery, to put artistic finish on their work rather than trade finish. I may, I hope, without being accused of egotism, say that my life for the last thirty years has given me ample opportunity for knowing the weariness and bitterness of that struggle.

For, to recur to my parenthesis, if the captain of industry (as it is the fashion to call a business man) thinks not of the wares with which he has to provide the world-market, but of profit to be made from them, so the instrument which he

employs as an adjunct to his machinery, the artisan, does not think of the wares which he (and the machine) produces as wares, but simply as livelihood for himself. The tradition of the work which he has to deal with has brought him to this, that instead of satisfying his own personal conception of what the wares he is concerned in making should be, he has to satisfy his master's view of the marketable quality of the said wares. And you must understand that this is a necessity of the way in which the workman works; to work thus means livelihood for him; to work otherwise means starvation. I beg you to note that this means that the realities of the wares are sacrificed to commercial shams of them, if that be not too strong a word. The manufacturer (as we call him) cannot turn out quite nothing and offer it for sale, at least in the case of articles of utility; what he does do is to turn out a makeshift of the article demanded by the public, and by means of the "sword of cheapness," as it has been called, he not only can force the said makeshift on the public, but can (and does) prevent them from getting the real thing; the real thing presently ceases to be made after the makeshift has been once foisted on to the market.

Now we won't concern ourselves about other makeshifts, however noxious to the pleasure of life they may be: let those excuse them that profit by them. But if you like to drink glucose beer instead of malt beer, and to eat oleomargarine instead of butter; if these things content you, at least ask yourselves what in the name of patience you want with a makeshift of art!

Indeed I began by saying that it was natural and reasonable for man to ornament his mere useful wares and not to be content with mere utilitarianism; but of course I assumed that the ornament was real, that it did not miss its mark, and become no ornament. For that is what makeshift art means, and that is indeed a waste of labour.

Try to understand what I mean: you want a ewer and basin, say: you go into a shop and buy one; you probably will not buy a merely white one; you will scarcely see a

merely white set. Well, you look at several, and one interests you about as much as another—that is, not at all; and at last in mere weariness you say, "Well, that will do"; and you have your crockery with a scrawl of fern leaves and convolvulus over it which is its "ornament." The said ornament gives you no pleasure, still less any idea; it only gives you an impression (a mighty dull one) of bedroom. The ewer also has some perverse stupidity about its handle which also says bedroom, and adds respectable: and in short you endure the said ornament, except perhaps when you are bilious and uncomfortable in health. You think, if you think at all, that the said ornament has wholly missed its mark. And yet that isn't so; that ornament, that special form which the ineptitude of the fern scrawl and the idiocy of the handle has taken, has sold so many dozen or gross more of that toilet set than of others, and that is what it is put there for; not to amuse you, you know it is not art, but you don't know that it is trade finish, exceedingly useful—to everybody except its user and its actual maker.

But does it serve no purpose except to the manufacturer, shipper, agent, shopkeeper, etc.? Ugly, inept, stupid, as it is, I cannot quite say that. For if, as the saying goes, hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue, so this degraded piece of trade finish is the homage which commerce pays to art. It is a token that art was once applied to ornamenting utilities, for the pleasure of their makers and their users.

Now we have seen that this applied art is worth cultivating, and indeed that we are here to cultivate it; but it is clear that, under the conditions above spoken of, its cultivation will be at least difficult. For the present conditions of life in which the application of art to utilities is made imply that a very serious change has taken place since those works of co-operative art were produced in the Middle Ages, which few people I think sufficiently estimate.

Briefly speaking, this change amounts to this, that Tradition has transferred itself from art to commerce—that commerce which has now embraced the old occupation of

war, as well as the production of wares. But the end proposed by commerce is the creation of a market-demand, and the satisfaction of it when created for the sake of the production of individual profits: whereas the end proposed by art applied to utilities, that is, the production of the days before commerce, was the satisfaction of the genuine spontaneous needs of the public, and the earning of individual livelihood by the producers. I beg you to consider these two ideas of production, and you will then see how wide apart they are from one another. To the commercial producer the actual wares are nothing; their adventures in the market are everything. To the artist the wares are everything; his market he need not trouble himself about; for he is asked by other artists to do what he does do, what his capacity urges him to do.

The ethics of the commercial person (squaring themselves of course to his necessities) bid him give as little as he can to the public, and take as much as he possibly can from them: the ethics of the artist bid him put as much of himself as he can in every piece of goods he makes. The commercial person, therefore, is in this position, that he is dealing with a public of enemies; the artist, on the contrary, with a public of friends and neighbours.

Again, it is clear that the commercial person must chiefly confine his energies to the war which he is waging; the wares that he deals in must be made by instruments—as far as possible by means of instruments without desires or passions, by automatic machines, as we call them. Where that is not possible, and he has to use highly-drilled human beings instead of machines, it is essential to his success that they should imitate the passionless quality of machines as long as they are at work; whatever of human feeling may be irrepressible will be looked upon by the commercial person as he looks upon grit or friction in his non-human machines, as a nuisance to be abated. Need I say that from these human machines it is futile to look for art? Whatever feelings they may have for art they must keep for their leisure—that is,

for the very few hours in the week when they are trying to rest after labour and are not asleep; or for the hapless days when they are out of employment and are in desperate anxiety about their livelihood.

Of these men, I say, you cannot hope that they can live by applying art to utilities: they can only apply the sham of it for commercial purposes; and I may say in parenthesis, that from experience I can guess what a prodigious amount of talent is thus wasted. For the rest you may consider, and workmen may consider, this statement of mine to be somewhat brutal: I can only reply both to you and to them, that it is a truth which it is necessary to face. It is one side of the disabilities of the working class, and I invite them to consider it seriously.

Therefore (as I said last year at Liverpool), I must turn from the great body of men who are producing utilities, and who are debarred from applying art to them, to a much smaller group, indeed a very small one. I must turn to a group of men who are not working under masters who employ them to produce for the world-market, but who are free to do as they please with their work, and are working for a market which they can see and understand, whatever the limitations may be under which they work: that is, the artists.

They are a small and a weak body, on the surface of things obviously in opposition to the general tendency of the age; debarred, therefore, as I have said, from true co-operative art; and as a consequence of this isolation heavily weighted in the race of success. For co-operative tradition places an artist at the very beginning of his career in a position wherein he has escaped the toil of learning a huge multitude of little matters, difficult, nay impossible to learn otherwise: the field which he has to dig is not a part of a primeval prairie, but ground made fertile and put in good heart by the past labour of countless generations. It is the apprenticeship of the ages, in short, whereby an artist is born into the workshop of the world.

We artists of to-day are not so happy as to share fully in this apprenticeship: we have to spend the best part of our lives in trying to get hold of some "style" which shall be natural to us, and too often fail in doing so; or perhaps oftener still, having acquired our "style," that is, our method of expression, become so enamoured of the means, that we forget the end, and find that we have nothing to express except our self-satisfaction in the possession of our very imperfect instrument; so that you will find clever and gifted men at the present day who are prepared to sustain as a theory, that art has no function but the display of clever executive qualities, and that one subject is as good as another. No wonder that this theory should lead them into the practice of producing pictures which we might pronounce to be clever, if we could understand what they meant, but whose meaning we can only guess at, and suppose that they are intended to convey the impression on a very short-sighted person of divers ugly incidents seen through the medium of a London fog.

Well I admit that this is a digression, as my subject is Applied Art, and such art cannot be applied to anything; and I am afraid, indeed, that it must be considered a mere market article.

Thus we artists of to-day are cut off from co-operative tradition, but I must not say that we are cut off from all tradition. And though it is undeniable that we are out of sympathy with the main current of the age, its commercialism, yet we are (even sometimes unconsciously) in sympathy with that appreciation of history which is a genuine growth of the times, and a compensation to some of us for the vulgarity and brutality which beset our lives; and it is through this sense of history that we are united to the tradition of past times.

Past times: are we reactionists, then, anchored in the dead past? Indeed I should hope not; nor can I altogether tell you how much of the past is really dead. I see about me now evidence of ideas recurring which have long been super-

seded. The world runs after some object of desire, strives strenuously for it, gains it, and apparently casts it aside; like a kitten playing with a ball, you say. No, not quite. The gain is gained, and something else has to be pursued, often something which once seemed to be gained and was let alone for a while. Yet the world has not gone back; for that old object of desire was only gained in the past as far as the circumstances of the day would allow it to be gained then. As a consequence the gain was imperfect; the times are now changed, and allow us to carry on that old gain a step forward to perfection: the world has not really gone back on its footsteps, though to some it has seemed to do so. Did the world go back, for instance, when the remnant of the ancient civilizations was overwhelmed by the barbarism which was the foundation of modern Europe? We can all see that it did not. Did it go back when the logical and orderly system of the Middle Ages had to give place to the confusion of incipient commercialism in the sixteenth century? Again, ugly and disastrous as the change seems on the surface, I yet think it was not a retrogression into prehistoric anarchy, but a step upward along the spiral, which, and not the straight line, is, as my friend Bax puts it, the true line of progress.

So that if in the future that shall immediately follow on this present we may have to recur to ideas that to-day seem to belong to the past only, that will not be really a retracing of our steps, but rather a carrying on of progress from a point where we abandoned it a while ago. On that side of things, the side of art, we have not progressed; we have disappointed the hopes of the period just before the time of abandonment: have those hopes really perished, or have they merely lain dormant, abiding the time when we, or our sons, or our sons' sons, should quicken them once more?

I must conclude that the latter is the case, that the hope of leading a life ennobled by the pleasurable exercise of our energies is not dead, though it has been for a while for-

gotten. I do not accuse the epoch in which we live of uselessness: doubtless it was necessary that civilized man should turn himself to mastering nature and winning material advantages undreamed of in former times; but there are signs in the air which show that men are not so wholly given to this side of the battle of life as they used to be. People are beginning to murmur and say: "So we have won the battle with nature; where then is the reward of victory? We have striven and striven, but shall we never enjoy? Man that was once weak is now most mighty. But his increase of happiness, where is that? who shall show it to us, who shall measure it? Have we done more than change one form of unhappiness for another, one form of unrest for another? We see the instruments which civilization has fashioned; what is she going to do with them? Make more and more and yet more? To what avail? If she would but use them, then indeed were something done. Meantime what is civilization doing? Day by day the world grows uglier, and where in the passing day is the compensating gain? Half-conquered nature forced us to toil, and yet for more reward than the sustenance of a life of toil; now nature is conquered, but still we force ourselves to toil for that bare unlovely wage: riches we have won without stint, but wealth is as far from us as ever, or it may be farther. Come then, since we are so mighty, let us try if we can not do the one thing worth doing; make the world, of which we are a part, somewhat happier."

This is the spirit of much that I hear said about me, not by poor or oppressed men only, but by those who have a good measure of the gains of civilization. I do not know if the same kind of feeling was about in the earlier times of the world; but I know that it means real discontent, a hope, partly unconscious, of better days: and I will be bold to say that the spirit of this latter part of our century is that of fruitful discontent, or rebellion; that is to say, of hope. And of that rebellion we artists are a part; and though we are but few, and few as we are, mere amateurs compared with the steady competency of the artists of bygone times, yet we

are of some use in the movement towards the attainment of wealth, that is toward the making of our instruments useful.

For we, at least, have remembered what most people have forgotten amongst the ugly unfruitful toil of the age of makeshifts, that it is possible to be happy, that labour may be a pleasure; nay, that the essence of pleasure abides in labour if it be duly directed; that is if it be directed towards the performance of those functions which wise and healthy people desire to see performed; in other words, if mutual help be its moving principle.

Well, since it is our business, as artists, to show the world that the pleasurable exercise of our energies is the end of life and the cause of happiness, and thus to show it which road the discontent of modern life must take in order to reach a fruitful home, it seems to me that we ought to feel our responsibilities keenly. It is true that we cannot but share in the poverty of this age of makeshifts, and for long I fear we can be little but amateurs. Yet, at least each in his own person, we may struggle against makeshifts in art. For instance, to press a little home on ourselves, if drawing is our weak point, let us try to improve ourselves on that side, and not proclaim that drawing is nothing and tone is everything. Or if we are bad colourists, let us set to work and learn, at least, to colour inoffensively (which I assure you can be learned), instead of jeering at those who give us beautiful colour habitually and easily. Or if we are ignorant of history, and without any sense of romance, don't let us try to exalt those deficiencies into excellences by maintaining the divinity of the ugly and the stupid. Let us leave all such unworthy shabbinesses to the Philistines and pessimists, who naturally want to drag everybody down to their level.

In short, we artists are in this position, that we are the representatives of craftsmanship which has become extinct in the production of market wares. Let us therefore do our very best to become as good craftsmen as possible; and if we

cannot be good craftsmen in one line, let us go down to the next, and find our level in the arts, and be good in that; if we are artists at all, we shall be sure to find out what we can do well, even if we cannot do it easily. Let us educate ourselves to be good workmen at all events, which will give us real sympathy with all that is worth doing in art, make us free of that great corporation of creative power, the work of all ages, and prepare us for that which is surely coming, the new co-operative art of life, in which there will be no slaves, no vessels to dishonour, though there will necessarily be subordination of capacities, in which the consciousness of each one that he belongs to a corporate body, working harmoniously, each for all, and all for each, will bring about real and happy equality.

ART AND INDUSTRY IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. AN ARTICLE IN "TIME," NOVEMBER, 1890.

IN England, at least, if not on the Continent of Europe, there are some towns and cities which have indeed a name that recalls associations with the past, but have no other trace left them of the course of that history which has made them what they are. Besides these, there are many more which have but a trace or two left; sometimes, indeed, this link with the past is so beautiful and majestic in itself that it compels us when we come across it to forget for a few moments the life of to-day with which we are so familiar that we do not mark its wonders or its meannesses, its follies or its tragedies. It compels us to turn away from our life of habit which is all about us on our right hand and our left, and which therefore we cannot see, and forces on us the consideration of past times which we can picture to ourselves as a whole, rightly or wrongly, because they are so far off. Sometimes, as we have been passing through the shabby streets of ill-burnt bricks, we have come on one of these links with the past and wondered. Before the eyes of my mind is such a place now. You travel by railway, get to your dull hotel by night, get up in the morning and breakfast in company with one or two men of the usual middle-class types, who even as they drink their tea and eat their eggs and glance at the sheet of lies, inanity, and ignorance, called a newspaper, by their sides, are obviously doing their business to come, in a vision. You go out into the street and wander up it; all about the station, and stretching away to the left, is a wilderness of small, dull houses built of a sickly-coloured yellow brick pretending to look like stone, and not even able to blush a faint brown blush at the imposture, and roofed with thin, cold, purple-coloured slates. They cry out at you at the first glance, workmen's houses; and a kind of instinct of information whispers to you: railway workmen and engineers. Bright as the spring morning is, a kind of

sick feeling of hopeless disgust comes over you, and you go on further, sure at any rate that you cannot fare worse. The street betters a little as you go on; shabbyish shops indeed, and mean houses of the bourgeoisie of a dull market town, exhibiting in their shop fronts a show of goods a trifle below the London standard, and looking "flash" at the best; and above them dull houses, greyish and reddish, recalling some associations of the stage-coach days and Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller, which would cheer you a little if you didn't see so many gaps in their lines filled up with the sickly yellow-white brick and blue slate, and with a sigh remember that even the romance surrounding Mr. Winkle is fast vanishing from the world. You let your eyes fall to the pavement and stop and stare a little, revolving many things, at a green-grocer's shop whose country produce probably comes mostly from Covent Garden, but looks fresh and green as a relief from the jerry building. Then you take a step or two onward and raise your eyes, and stand transfixed with wonder, and a wave of pleasure and exultation sweeps away the memory of the squalidness of to-day and the shabby primness of yesterday; such a feeling as takes hold of the city-dweller when, after a night journey, he wakes and sees through his windows some range of great and noble mountains. And indeed this at the street's end is a mountain also; but wrought by the hand and the brain of man, and bearing the impress of his will and his aspirations; for there heaves itself up above the meanness of the street and its petty commercialism a mass of grey stone traceried and carved and moulded into a great triple portico beset with pinnacles and spires, so orderly in its intricacy, so elegant amidst its hugeness, that even without any thought of its history or meaning it fills your whole soul with satisfaction. You walk on a little and see before you at last an ancient gate that leads into the close of the great church, but as if dreading that when you come nearer you may find some piece of modern pettiness or incongruity which will mar it, you turn away down a cross street from which the huge front is no longer visible, though

its image is still in your mind's eye. The street leads you in no long while to a slow-flowing river crossed by an ugly modern iron bridge, and you are presently out in the fields, and going down a long causeway with a hint of Roman work in it. It runs along the river through a dead flat of black, peaty-looking country where long rows of men and women are working with an overlooker near them, giving us uncomfortable suggestions of the land on the other side of the Atlantic as it was; and you half expect as you get near some of these groups to find them black and woolly haired; but they are white as we call it, burned and grimed to dirty brown though; fair-sized and strong-looking enough, both men and women; but the women roughened and spoilt, with no remains of gracefulness, or softness of face or figure; the men heavy and depressed-looking; all that are not young, bent and beaten, and twisted and starved and weathered out of shape; in short, English field-labourers. You turn your face away with a sigh toward the town again, and see towering over its mean houses and the sluggish river and the endless reclaimed fen the flank of that huge building, whose front you saw just now, plainer and severer than the front, but harmonious and majestic still. A long roof tops it and a low, square tower rises from its midst. The day is getting on now, and the wind setting from the north-west is driving the smoke from the railway-works round the long roof and besmirching it somewhat; but still it looks out over the huddle of houses and the black fen with its bent rows of potato-hoers, like some relic of another world. What does it mean? Over there the railway-works with their monotonous hideousness of dwelling-houses for the artisans; here the gangs of the field-labourers; twelve shillings a week for ever and ever, and the workhouse for all day of judgment, of rewards and punishments; on each side and all around the nineteenth century, and rising solemnly in the midst of it, that token of the "dark ages," their hope in the past, grown now a warning for our future.

A thousand years ago our forefathers called the place

Medehamstead, the abode of the meadows. They used the Roman works and doubtless knew little who wrought them, as by the side of the river Nene they drew together some stockaded collection of wooden and wattled houses. Then came the monks and built a church, which they dedicated to St. Peter; a much smaller and ruder building than that whose beauty has outlasted so many hundred years of waste and neglect and folly, but which seemed grand to them; so grand, that what for its building, what for the richness of its shrines, Medehamstead got to be called the Golden Burg. Doubtless that long stretching water there knew more than the monks' barges and the coracles of the fenmen, and the oars of the Norsemen have often beaten it white; but records of the sacking of the Golden Burg I have not got till the time when a valiant man of the country, in desperate contest with Duke William, the man of Blood and Iron of the day, led on the host of the Danes to those rich shrines, and between them they stripped the Golden Burg down to its stone and timber. Hereward, that valiant man, was conquered and died, and what was left of the old tribal freedom of East England sank lower and lower into the Romanized feudality that crossed the Channel with the Frenchmen. But the country grew richer, and the craftsmen defter, and some three generations after that sacking of the Golden Burg, St. Peter's Church rose again, a great and noble pile, the most part of which we have seen to-day.

Time passed again; the feudal system had grown to its full height, and the cloud as big as a man's hand was rising up to overshadow it in the end. Doubtless this town played its part in this change: had a great gild changing to a commune, federating the craft-gilds under it; and was no longer called Medehamstead or the Golden Burg, but after its patron saint, Peterborough. And as a visible token of those times, the gilds built for the monks in the thirteenth century that wonderful piece of ordered beauty which you saw just now rising from out the grubby little streets of the early nineteenth century. They added to the great Church here

and there in the fourteenth century, traceried windows to the aisles, two spirelets to the front, that low tower in the midst. The fifteenth century added certain fringes and trimmings, so to say, to the building; and so it was left to bear as best it could the successive waves of degradation, the blindness of middle-class puritanism, the brutality of the eighteenth-century squirearchy, and the stark idealless stupidity of the early nineteenth century; and there it stands now, with the foul sea of modern civilization washing against it; a token, as I said, of the hopes that were, and which civilization has destroyed. Might it but give a lesson to the hopes that are, and which shall some day destroy civilization!

For what was the world so utterly different from ours of this day, the world that completed the glories of the Golden Burg, which to-day is called Peterborough, and is chiefly known, I fear, as the depôt of the Great Northern Railway? This glorious building is a remnant of the feudal system, which even yet is not so well understood amongst us as it should be; and especially, people scarcely understand how great a gulf lies between the life of that day and the life of ours. The hypocrisy of so-called constitutional development has blinded us to the greatness of the change which has taken place; we use the words King, Parliament, Commerce, and so on, as if their connotation was the same as in that past time. Let us very briefly see, for the sake of a better understanding of the art and industry embodied in such works as Peterborough Cathedral, what was the relation of the complete feudal system with its two tribes, the one the unproductive masters, the other the productive servants, to the older incomplete feudality which it superseded; or in other words, what the Middle Ages came to before the development of the seeds of decay in them became obvious.

On the surface, the change from the serf and baron society of the earlier Middle Ages to the later Gild and Parliament Middle Ages was brought about by the necessities of feudalism. The necessities of the conquering or unproductive tribe gave opportunities to the progressive part of the

conquered or productive tribe to raise its head out of the mere serfdom which in earlier times had been all it could look to. At bottom, this process of the rise of the towns under feudalism was the result of economical causes. The poor remains of the old tribal liberties, the folkmotes, the meetings round the shire-oak, the trial by compurgation, all these customs which imply the equality of freemen, would have faded into mere symbols and traditions of the past if it had not been for the irrepressible life and labour of the people, of those who really did the work of society in the teeth of the arbitrary authority of the feudal hierarchy. For you must remember that its very arbitrariness made the latter helpless before the progress of the productive part of that society. The upper classes had not got hold of those material means of production which enable them now to make needs in order to satisfy them for the sake of profit; the miracle of the world-market had not yet been exhibited. Commerce, in our sense of the word, did not exist: people produced for their own consumption, and only exchanged the overplus of what they did not consume. A man would then sell the results of his labour in order to buy wherewithal to live upon or to live better; whereas at present he buys other people's labour in order to sell its results, that he may buy yet more labour, and so on to the end of the chapter; the mediæval man began with production, the modern begins with money. That is, there was no capital in our sense of the word; nay, it was a main care of the crafts, as we shall see later on, that there should be none. The money lent at usury was not lent for the purposes of production, but as spending-money for the proprietors of land: and their land was not capitalizable as it now is; they had to eat its produce from day to day, and used to travel about the country doing this like bands of an invading army, which was indeed what they were; but they could not, while the system lasted, drive their now tenants, erewhile serfs, off their lands, or fleece them beyond what the custom of the manor allowed, unless by sheer violence or illegal swindling; and also every free man had at least the use

of some portion of the soil on which he was born. All this means that there was no profit to be made out of anything but the land; and profit out of that was confined to the lords of the soil, the superior tribe, the invading army, as represented in earlier times by Duke William and his hirelings. But even they could not accumulate their profit: the very serfdom that enabled them to live as an unproductive class forbade them to act as land capitalists: the serfs had to perform the customary services and nothing more, and thereby got a share of the produce over and above the economic rent, which surplus would to-day certainly not go to the cultivators of the soil. Now since all the class-robbery that there was was carried on by means of the land, and that not by any means closely or carefully, in spite of distinct arbitrary laws directed against the workers, which again were never fully carried out, it follows that it was easy for the productive class to live. Poor men's money was good, says one historian; necessaries were very cheap, that is, ordinary food (not the cagmag of to-day), ordinary clothing and housing; but luxuries were dear. Spices from the East, foreign fruits, cloth of gold, gold and silver plate, silk, velvet, Arras tapestries, Iceland gerfalcons, Turkish dogs, lions, and the like, doubtless cost far more than they do to-day. For the rest, men's desires keep pace with their power over nature, and in those days their desires were comparatively few; the upper class did not live so much more comfortably then than the lower; so there were not the same grounds or room for discontent as there are nowadays. A workman then might have liked to possess a canopy of cloth of gold or a big cupboard of plate; whereas now the contrast is no longer between splendour and simplicity, but between ease and anxiety, refinement and sordidness.

The ordinary life of the workman then was easy; what he suffered from was either the accidents of nature, which the society of the day had not yet learned to conquer, or the violence of his masters, the business of whose life was then open war, as it is now veiled war. Storm, plague, famine and battle,

were his foes then; scarcity and the difficulty of bringing goods from one place to another were what pinched him, not as now, superabundance and the swiftness of carriage. Yet, in some respects even here, the contrast was not so violent as it is nowadays between rich and poor; for, if the artisan was apt to find himself in a besieged city, and had to battle at all adventure for his decent life and easy work, there were vicissitudes enough in the life of the lord also, and the great prince who sat in his hall like a god one day, surrounded by his gentlemen and men-at-arms, might find himself presently as the result of some luckless battle riding barefoot and bare-headed to the gallows-tree: distinguished politicians risked more then than they do now. A change of government was apt to take heads off shoulders.

What was briefly the process that led to this condition of things, a condition certainly not intended by the iron feudalism which aimed at embracing all life in its rigid grasp, and would not, if it had not been forced to it, have suffered the serf to escape from serfdom, the artisan to have any status except that of a serf, the gild to organize labour, or the town to become free? The necessities of the feudal lord were the opportunities of the towns: the former not being able to squeeze his serf-tenants beyond a certain point, and having no means of making his money grow, had to keep paying for his main position by yielding up what he thought he could spare of it to the producing classes. Of course, that is clear enough to see in reading mediæval history; but what gave the men of the towns the desire to sacrifice their hard earnings for the sake of position, for the sake of obtaining a status alongside that of the baron and the bishop? The answer to my mind is clear: the spirit of association which had never died out of the peoples of Europe, and which in Northern Europe at least had been kept alive by the gilds which in turn it developed; the strong organization that feudalism could not crush.

The tale of the origin and development of the gilds is as long as it is interesting, and it can only be touched on here; for the history of the gilds is practically the history of the

people in the Middle Ages, and what follows must be familiar to most of my readers. And I must begin by saying that it was not, as some would think (speaking always of Northern Europe), the towns that made the gilds, but the gilds that made the towns. These latter, you must remember once more, important as they grew to be before the Middle Ages ended, did not start with being organized centres of life political and intellectual, with tracts of country whose business it was just to feed and nourish them; in other words, they did not start with being mere second-rate imitations of the Greek and Roman cities. They were simply places on the face of the country where the population drawn together by convenience was thicker than in the ordinary country, a collection of neighbours associating themselves together for the ordinary business of life, finding it convenient in those disturbed times to palisade the houses and closes which they inhabited and lived by. But even before this took place, and while the unit of habitation was not even a village, but a homestead (or tun), our Teutonic and Scandinavian forefathers, while yet heathens, were used to band themselves together for feasts and sacrifices and for mutual defence and relief against accident and violence into what would now be called benefit societies, but which they called gilds. The change of religion from heathenism to Christianity did not make any difference to these associations; but as society grew firmer and more peaceful, as the commerce of our forefathers became something more than the selling to one town what the traders had plundered from another, these gilds developed in one direction into associations for the defence of the carriers and sellers of goods (who you must remember in passing had little in common with our merchants and commercial people); and on the other side began to grow into associations for the regulation of the special crafts, amongst which the building and clothing crafts were naturally pre-eminent. The development of these two sides of the gilds went on together, but at first the progress of the trading gilds, being administrative or political, was more marked

than that of the craft-gilds, and their status was recognized much more readily by the princes of the feudal hierarchy; though I should say once for all that the direct development of the gilds did not flourish except in those countries where the undercurrent of the customs of the free tribes was too strong to be quite merged in the main stream of Romanized feudality. Popes, bishops, emperors, and kings in their early days fulminated against them; for instance, an association in Northern France for resistance to the Norse sea-robbers was condemned under ferocious penalties. In England, at any rate, where the king was always carrying on a struggle with his baronage, he was generally glad to acknowledge the claims of the towns or communes to a free administration as a make-weight to the power of the great feudatories; and here as well as in Flanders, Denmark, and North Germany, the merchant-gild was ready to form that administrative power, and so slid insensibly into the government of the growing towns under the name of the Great Gild, the Porte, the Lineage, and so on. These Great Gilds, the corporations of the towns, were from the first aristocratic and exclusive, even to the extent of excluding manual workmen; in the true spirit of Romanized feudalism, so diametrically opposed to that of the earlier tribal communities, in the tales of which the great chiefs are shown smithying armour, building houses and ships, and sowing their fields, just as the heroes of the Iliad and the Odyssey do. They were also exclusive in another way, membership in them being in the main an hereditary privilege, and they became at last very harsh and oppressive. But these bodies, divorced from labour and being nothing but governors, or at most administrators, on the one hand, and on the other not being an integral portion of the true feudal hierarchy, could not long hold their own against the gilds of craft, who all this while were producing and organizing production. There was a continuous and fierce struggle between the aristocratic and democratic elements in the towns, and plenty of downright fighting, bitter and cruel enough after the fashion of the times; besides a gradual pro-

gress of the crafts in getting hold of the power in the communes or municipalities. This went on all through the thirteenth century, and in the early part of the fourteenth the artisans had everywhere succeeded, and the affairs of the towns were administered by the federated craft-gilds. This brings us to the culminating period of the Middle Ages, the period to which my remarks on the condition of labourers apply most completely; though you must remember that the spirit which finally won the victory for the craft-gilds had been at work from the first, contending not only against the mere tyranny and violence incidental to those rough times, but also against the hierarchical system, the essential spirit of feudality. The progress of the gilds, which from the first were social, was the form which the class-struggle took in the Middle Ages.

Art and Industry in the Fourteenth Century

I will now try to go a little more in detail into the conditions of art and industry in those days, conditions which it is clear, even from the scattered hints given above, are very different from those of to-day; so different indeed, that many people cannot conceive of them. The rules of the crafts in the great towns of Flanders will give us as typical examples as can be got at; since the mechanical arts, especially of weaving, were there farther advanced than anywhere else in Northern Europe. Let us take then the cloth-weavers of Flanders, and see under what rules they worked. No master to employ more than three journeymen in his workshop: no one under any pretence to have more than one workshop: the wages fixed per day, and the number of hours also: no work to be done on holidays. If piecework (which was allowed), the price per yard fixed: but only so much and no more to be done in a day. No one allowed to buy wool privately, but at open sales duly announced. No mixing of wools allowed; the man who uses English wool (the best) not to have any other on his premises. English and other foreign cloth not allowed to be sold. Workmen not belonging to the commune not admitted unless hands fell short. Most of these rules and many others may be considered to

have been made in the direct interest of the workmen. Now for safeguards for the public: the workman must prove that he knows his craft duly: he serves as apprentice first, then as journeyman, after which he is a master if he can manage capital enough to set up three looms besides his own, which, of course, he generally could do. Width of web is settled; colour of list according to quality; no work to be done in a frost, or in a bad light. All cloth must be "walked" or fulled a certain time, and to a certain width; and so on, and so on. And finally every piece of cloth must stand the test of examination, and if it fall short, goes back to the maker, who is fined; if it come up to the due standard it is marked as satisfactory.

Now you will see that the accumulation of capital is impossible under such regulations as this, and it was meant to be impossible. The theory of industry among these communes was something like this. There is a certain demand for the goods which we can make, and a certain settled population to make them: if the goods are not thoroughly satisfactory we shall lose our market for them and be ruined: we must therefore keep up their quality to the utmost. Furthermore, the work to be done must be shared amongst the whole of those who can do it, who must be sure of work always as long as they are well behaved and industrious, and also must have a fair livelihood and plenty of leisure; as why should they not?

We shall find plenty of people to-day to cry out on this as slavery; but to begin with, history tells us that these workmen did not fight like slaves at any rate; and certainly a condition of slavery in which the slaves were well fed, and clothed, and housed, and had abundance of holidays, has not often been realized in the world's history. Yes, some will say, but their minds were enslaved. Were they? Their thoughts moved in the narrow circle maybe; and yet I can't say that a man is of slavish mind who is free to express his thoughts, such as they are; still less if he habitually expresses them; least of all if he expresses them in a definite form

which gives pleasure to other people, what we call producing works of art; and these workmen of the communes did habitually produce works of art. Art and Industry in the Fourteenth Century

I have told you that the chief contrast between the upper and lower classes of those days was that the latter lacked the showy pomp and circumstance of life, and that the contrast rather lay there than in refinement and non-refinement. It is possible that some readers might judge from our own conditions that this lack involved the lack of art; but here, indeed, there was little cause for discontent on the part of the lower classes in those days; it was splendour rather than art in which they could feel any lack. It is, I know, so difficult to conceive of this nowadays that many people don't try to do so, but simply deny this fact; which is, however, undeniable by any one who had studied closely the art of the Middle Ages and its relation to the workers. I must say what I have often said before, that in those times there was no such thing as a piece of handicraft being ugly; that everything made had a due and befitting form; that most commonly, however ordinary its use might be, it was elaborately ornamented; such ornament was always both beautiful and inventive, and the mind of the workman was allowed full play and freedom in producing it; and also that for such art there was no extra charge made; it was a matter of course that such and such things should be ornamented, and the ornament was given and not sold. And this condition of the ordinary handicrafts with reference to the arts was the foundation of all that nobility of beauty which we were considering in a building like Peterborough Cathedral, and without that its beauty would never have existed. As it was, it was no great task to rear a building that should fill men's minds with awe and admiration when people fell to doing so of set purpose, in days when every cup and plate and knife-handle was beautiful.

When I had the Golden Burg in my eye just now, it was by no means only on account of its external beauty that I was so impressed by it, and wanted my readers to share my

admiration, but it was also on account of the history embodied in it. To me it & its like are tokens of the aspirations of the workers five centuries ago; aspirations of which time alone seemed to promise fulfilment, & which were definitely social in character. If the leading element of association in the life of the mediæval workman could have cleared itself of certain drawbacks, and have developed logically along the road that seemed to be leading it onward, it seems to me it could scarcely have stopped short of forming a true society founded on the equality of labour: the Middle Ages, so to say, saw the promised land of Socialism from afar, like the Israelites, and like them had to turn back again into the desert. For the workers of that time, like us, suffered heavily from their masters: the upper classes who lived on their labour, finding themselves barred from progress by their lack of relation to the productive part of society, and at the same time holding all political power, turned towards aggrandizing themselves by perpetual war and shuffling of the political positions, and so opened the door to the advance of bureaucracy, and the growth of that thrice-accursed spirit of nationality which so hampers us even now in all attempts towards the realization of a true society. Furthermore, the association of the time, instinct as it was with hopes of something better, was exclusive. The commune of the Middle Ages, like the classical city, was unhappily only too often at strife with its sisters, and so became a fitting instrument for the greedy noble or bureaucratic king to play on. The gildsman's duties were bounded on the one hand by the limits of his craft, and on the other by the boundaries of the liberties of his city or town. The instinct of union was there, otherwise the course of the progress of association would not have had the unity which it did have: but the means of intercourse were lacking, and men were forced to defend the interests of small bodies against all comers, even those whom they should have received as brothers.

But, after all, these were but tokens of the real causes that checked the development of the Middle Ages towards

Communism; that development can be traced from the survival of the primitive Communism which yet lived in the early days of the Middle Ages. The birth of tradition, strong in instinct, was weak in knowledge, and depended for its existence on its checking the desire of mankind for knowledge and the conquest of material nature: its own success in developing the resources of labour ruined it; it opened chances to men of growing rich and powerful if they could succeed in breaking down the artificial restrictions imposed by the gilds for the sake of the welfare of their members. The temptation was too much for the craving ignorance of the times, that were yet not so ignorant as not to have an instinct of what boundless stores of knowledge lay before the bold adventurer. As the need for the social and political organization of Europe blotted out the religious feeling of the early Middle Ages which produced the Crusades, so the need for knowledge and the power over material nature swept away the communistic aspirations of the fourteenth century, and it was not long before people had forgotten that they had ever existed.

The world had to learn another lesson; it had to gain power, and not be able to use it; to gain riches, and starve upon them like Midas on his gold; to gain knowledge, and then have newspapers for its teachers; in a word, to be so eager to gather the results of the deeds of the life of man that it must forget the life of man itself. Whether the price of the lesson was worth the lesson we can scarcely tell yet; but one comfort is that we are fast getting perfect in it; we shall, at any rate, not have to begin at the beginning of it again. The hope of the renaissance of the time when Europe first opened its mouth wide to fill its belly with the east wind of commercialism, that hope is passing away, and the ancient hope of the workmen of Europe is coming to life again. Times troublous and rough enough we shall have, doubtless, but not that dull time over again during which labour lay hopeless and voiceless under the muddle of self-satisfied competition.

It is not so hard now to picture to oneself those grey masses of stone, which our forefathers raised in their hope, standing no longer lost and melancholy over the ghastly misery of the fields and the squalor of the towns, but smiling rather on their new-born sisters the houses and halls of the free citizens of the new Communes, and the garden-like fields about them where there will be labour still, but the labour of the happy people who have shaken off the curse of labour and kept its blessing only. Between the time when the hope of the workman disappeared in the fifteenth century and our own times, there is a great gap indeed, but we know now that it will be filled up before long, and that our own lives from day to day may help to fill it. That is no little thing and is well worth living for, whatever else may fail us.

THE INFLUENCE OF BUILDING MATERIALS UPON ARCHITECTURE. DELIVERED BEFORE THE ART WORKERS' GUILD AT BARNARD'S INN HALL, LONDON, JANUARY, 1892.*

I AM afraid after all that, though the subject is a very important one, yet there are so many of you present who must know all about it, that you will find what I have to say is little better than commonplace. Still, you know there are occasions and times when commonplaces have to be so to say hammered home, and even those who profess the noble art of architecture want a certain sort of moral support in that line; they know perfectly well what they ought to do, but very often they find themselves in such an awkward position that they cannot do it, owing no doubt to the stupidity of their clients, who after all are not so stupid as they might be, one may think, since they employ them. Nevertheless, their clients generally are not educated persons on the subject of architecture.

Now the subject of Material is clearly the foundation of architecture, and perhaps one would not go very far wrong if one defined architecture as the art of building suitably with suitable material. There are certainly many other things which are considered architectural, and yet not nearly so intimately and essentially a part of architecture, as a consideration of material. Also, it seems to me, there is one important thing to be considered with reference to material in architecture at the present time, when all people are seeking about for some sort of style. We know of course, and there is no use denying the fact, that we are in a period when style is a desideratum which everybody is seeking for, and which very few people find; and it seems to me that nothing is more likely to lead to a really living style than the consideration, first of all, as a *sine quâ non*, of the suitable use of material. In fact, I do not see how we are to have anything but perpetual imitation, eclectic imitation of this, that, and the other style in the past, unless we begin with

* This was an informal address printed from a reporter's notes.—Ed.

considering what material lies about us, and how we are to use it, and the way to build it up in such a form as will really put us in the position of being architects, alive and practising to-day, and not merely architects handing over to a builder and to builder's men all the difficulties of the profession, and only keeping for ourselves that part of it which can be learnt in a mechanical and rule-of-thumb way.

Now I suppose, in considering the materials of a building, one ought to begin by considering the walls. I am not going to trouble myself very much about those materials which afford opportunities for the exercise of particular *finesse* in the way of architecture, but rather I shall refer to the more homely and everyday materials. I suppose one may fairly divide materials for the building of a wall into three sections; first stone, then timber, and lastly brick. In doing so, and in giving them that order, I distinctly myself mean to indicate the relative position of nobility between those three materials. Stone is definitely the most noble material, the most satisfactory material; wood is the next, and brick is a makeshift material.

Those of you who are architects I am quite sure know the difficulties that you find yourselves involved in when you have to build a stone building. You will find probably that your London builder is not by any means the best man to go to. The fact of the matter is, London builders have really ceased to understand the ground principles on which stone should be used. Now I think the consideration of stone buildings has this extreme importance about it, that when you fairly begin to consider how best to deal with stone as a material, you have begun then first to free yourself from the bonds of mere academic architecture. The academical architect, it seems to me, assumes as a matter of course that all buildings are built with ashlar on the face of them, and not only so, but that all stone buildings through and through are built with ashlar. That is the impression an academical building always gives me, that it is built of great cubes of stone as big as you can possibly get them; and very

naturally, because it seems to be something like a canon in academical architecture that if you want a building bigger than the average buildings, you must increase every one of its members in order to get to that great size, and the net result is, that the whole of the members of that academic building are all one size, and as a rule they all look about the size of a Wesleyan Methodist meeting-house; that is, you lose all scale. It seems to me that the use of stone in a proper and considerate manner does in the first place lead to your being able to get a definite size and scale to a building. The building no longer looks, as so many renaissance buildings do, as if it might just as well be built of brick and plastered over with compo. You can see, in fact, the actual bones and structure. But it is something more than that; you can see in point of fact the life of it by studying the actual walls. This organic life of a building is so interesting, so beautiful even, that it is a distinct and definite pleasure to see a large blank wall without any ordinary architectural features, if it is really properly built and properly placed together. In point of fact this seems to me almost the beginning of architecture, that you can raise a wall which impresses you at once by its usefulness; its size, if it is big; its delicacy, if it is small; and in short by its actual life; that is the beginning of building altogether.

Influence of Building Materials upon Architecture

Now to go a little further into detail. The kind of building you want in different places is very different. There is a great deal of very beautiful building to be seen all about the country which is, in point of fact, built merely as a barn or a cart-shed is built; and I think it would be a great pity if we lost all that. We cannot build the whole of our buildings throughout the whole country in careful close-jointed ashlar, and I think it would be a great pity if we could; but the difference between the town and country, especially a big city, strikes me rather strongly in that respect. How many buildings one sees, big dignified buildings, gentlemen's country houses, standing in the middle of a park, or something of that kind, that are most inexpressibly dreary—to a great

extent because they are not built in the ordinary fashion of the country-side in which they are raised, quite apart from any matter of architectural design. But in passing through the country one sees many examples of thoroughly good ordinary country buildings, built of the mere country materials, very often of the mere stones out of the fields; and it is a very great pleasure to see the skill with which these buildings are constructed. They are very often not pointed at all, but you cannot help noticing the skill with which the mason has picked out his longs and his shorts, and put the thing together with really something, you must say, like rhythm and measurement (his traditional skill that was), and with the best possible results. I cannot help thinking that on the whole London and the big towns are not places where stone building is usually desirable. There is only one stone, it seems to me, that looks tolerably well in London, and that is good Portland stone; and that looks well partly owing to the curious way in which the exposed parts of it get whistled by the wind, and the mouldings and hollows and all the rest of it get blackened, the very smoke even doing something probably for Portland stone in London. But you have plenty of examples of the disastrous effects of building with a great many stones that have been used in London. One unfortunate result of architectural research in the past: people were taught, when the Gothic revival first came in, that in old days in London they used to build with that rough stone out of Kent, rubble walls and stone dressings; so that there are heaps of Gothic churches of that date about the town, and it is almost a regular kind of sacramental word in the newspapers that criticize such matters: "built of Kentish rag-stone with Bath stone dressings," and the result is very dismal on all hands. There is this wretched rag-stone, which was used at a time when there was no smoke in London, at a time when the inhabitants of London petitioned Edward the First against the introduction of pit-coal into London because it dirtied the houses; whereas nowadays no one seems inclined to petition

against the introduction of smoke: and there it is; it blackens the rough rag-stone, and the sulphuric acid in the atmosphere utterly destroys the oolite limestone of Bath.

Influence of Building Materials upon Architecture

Now as for stone building, clearly in London one wants a smooth stone building, and if one cannot get a smooth stone building it seems to me that the next best thing is to have a building of good bricks; but I suppose the very words that I have mentioned, good bricks, are enough to raise up visions of all sorts of trouble and bother which architects here have in trying to get these good bricks; and I must say that in building with good bricks in London (if only you can get good bricks), I should like to see places built of good bricks, and entirely built of brick, with no attempt to add anything else to them. I think, as a rule, that is really all one wants in big towns. One has seen examples of exactly the contrary sort of work. Take for example the big municipal buildings in Manchester, built partly of brick and partly with freestone dressings, and so on. The freestone dressings are now getting a horrible dirty drab black, worse than a mere black, and the whole result is that whatever architecture there may be in the building is pretty much destroyed and obliterated by the dirt. If the building had been built entirely of brick it would have preserved its character; it would have got all darker together, and would have preserved its own outlines right away to the end, and, although you might have regretted the dustiness and dreariness of its blackening, yet still you would have had the real outline of the building, not confused with all this growing and obviously unavoidable dirt that is actually collected about it.

As to bricks, it is quite clear that we ought to make rather more efforts than are made to get the bricks better adapted to their work. I spoke just now about Broseley tiles. Just call to your memory the ordinary villages in the Midland counties of England, which I suppose were once pretty places. They are no longer pretty places at all. There are two

reasons why they are ugly now; because the buildings, whatever they once were, have almost entirely given place to buildings built of the Midland county bricks, which are great big, stumpy, lumpy blocks of clay, a very bad colour as a rule; "excellent material" I believe builders would call them; and they are all roofed with these Staffordshire tiles, the worst peculiarity of which is that they never weather to a decent colour; a few months after they are put up they get a vile dirty sort of black colour, even in the country (it is not merely the smoke) and at that black colour they stick to the end of the chapter.

Well, I cannot go very much further than that, as far as the stone goes. To build country fashion in the country if possible would certainly be my advice, and in the town to do what you best can; to look the thing fairly and squarely in the face, and see what you can do to prevent your fine architecture from being made sheer nonsense.

The other material that I mentioned, the one that came second in my list of good materials, wood, is I suppose (I am speaking now of walls) a thing which cannot often be used nowadays. It seems to me to be mainly because you can no longer use wood as a material for a wall as frankly as it used to be used in mediæval times, when good oak was almost a drug in the market. To build wooden houses with the framing of small dimensions seems to me one of the poorest things one can possibly do. You want, in point of fact, in order to build a satisfactory wooden house, to be able to indulge in the greatest possible generosity of material, to have no sparing whatever, or else your wooden house will look like nothing but a feeble attempt to imitate the results of the architecture of the past. So that, after all, in spite of my great liking for wood, for I think there is nothing more beautiful than a beautiful wooden house, I am afraid we must at present put the use of wood clean out of the question. We cannot build a house with wooden walls at present; the main material that walls must be built of nowadays is brick, and, therefore, again, I urge all architects to do the

utmost they possibly can to get their bricks as well made and as well shaped as they can, that is to say, as long as possible and as narrow as possible, and to build them with wide joints of the very best mortar.

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Now there is, by the way, another kindred material to brick, and that is the cast brick they call terra-cotta. I cannot abide it, I must say. I do not think I need treat it any further, and I will tell you why. It is used for nothing else except ornament, and I am rather inclined to think that of all things not wanted at the present day, and especially in London outside a house, the thing that is least wanted is ornament. That is to say, as long as there is a huge congeries of houses, as in London, the greater part of which are lamentably and hideously ugly, I think one ought to pitch one's note rather low, and try, if one can manage it, to get the houses and buildings to look solid and reasonable, and to impress people with their obvious adaptation to their uses; where they can be made big to make them big, and not to bother about ornament. Such ornament as there is, to keep it for the inside, where at all events it can be treated with delicacy, and you do not feel that you have something which after all, whatever value there is in it as ornament, will presently disappear, and you simply get something which is of no particular use, except for collecting dirt. You know perfectly well how that cast stuff is generally used; I noticed some as I came along just now, and I said to myself: After all, these things are not a bit like cast work, or moulded work at all; they look like a bad imitation of carved work. It has a fatal ease in the matter of ornamentation, which makes the material, it seems to me, decidedly bad for its purpose. I think it is very much better if you want to have brick ornament on a building to get cut and rubbed brick. From the point of view of ordinary practical and everyday use at the present time, I think it is hardly worth while in this country to talk about marble as a material; certainly not for the outside of a building. As a method of ornamenting wall surfaces on the inside marble is the most difficult material to use which it is possible to

conceive. I do not know how it is, but unless it is used with the utmost skill, a skill which must, to be successful, be the result of many centuries of tradition—unless it is so used, the marble even in the inside does decidedly vulgarize the building, however beautiful it may be in itself.

Now we come to another point, which is the material of roofs; and this is, in a way, almost more important than the material of the walls of a building. First of all I have one thing to say, which is this. I am not tyrannically disposed, nor given to inciting the Government in its attempt to deal with the morals and feelings of its subjects; but I should be really rather glad, although I should not like to have a hand in it, if some Government were to forbid entirely the use of Welsh slates. If the Welsh slate quarries could be shut up by Act of Parliament, or by whatever may be stronger than an Act of Parliament, I think I myself should have a very good sleep, and a happy getting up in the morning afterwards. In point of fact, I think all architects ought to make up their minds to one thing, that the use of these Welsh slates does distinctly stamp a building as being merely the exhibition of the very depth of poverty. If you are so poor that you cannot help using Welsh slates, then use them, but in that case say to your client: I cannot under these circumstances degrade myself by attempting to make this building ornamental. It is not the work of an architect at all, it is simply a trumpery makeshift which is to be removed as soon as you have a little money; consequently I refuse to put any ornament on it; I will not have so much as a moulding of any kind. Here you have a shed (a very ugly shed, you ought to add); you know after all it is perfectly possible for a shed to be put up with no ornament at all which shall be a very beautiful thing, but I am afraid it is impossible to have architecture with these thin slates. Of course it is perfectly true that there are some beautiful buildings covered with these thin slates, but then I think one always looks at that as a mere blemish to be removed. One can conceive that the building, which is now roofed with slate, once was not roofed with slate, and

one supposes it away, or else one would be so disgusted at the sight of it that one could hardly bear to look at the building at all. So that, I think, is the first thing to be thought of by all architects. How shall we possibly be able to manage not to roof our building, however little there is to be spent upon it, with these miserable thin slates? Just consider the effect in places you have seen that comes of the use of a material that is better than ordinary slate. I have before my mind's eye now some of those big squares in Edinburgh for example. They are a very uninteresting set of buildings there, by no means exhilarating, yet the fact that they are most of them covered with something better than ordinary thin slate decidedly gives them a kind of pleasantness, and even a kind of dignity that they would not otherwise possess. You look out of your window in the morning from a portion of the city high up over the roofs; you look down upon them, and instead of giving you a pain in the stomach they really give you a certain kind of pleasure. There are a lot of these things all tumbled together, and they have a certain kind of interest in them, and the covering of them is after all tolerable. Of course it is possible, even in Wales, to roof things with something better than the ordinary slates that are used; because you may notice that in the little bits of cottages and farmhouses where there is no attempt at any sort of architecture, although the colour of the slates is not pleasant, yet they do not look quite so bad as they otherwise would, simply because the slates are a good thickness, and because they are chipped at the edges; being, I suppose, the waste of the quarries, and as a result they look pretty well.

Influence of Building Materials upon Architecture

I have often spoken to architects about this, and I find even architects who ought to know the merits of them are rather shy of using them. They give very excellent reasons, no doubt; the first, that if you have these heavy stone slates you must have your timbers on the roof heavy. Very well, I should say in answer to that, If the roofs are not heavy enough to carry stone slates properly, they are not heavy enough to be roofs at all. You want that scantling of timber

to make the roof really lasting, and this would enable it to carry stone slates perfectly easily. The other reasons, I suppose, for their not using them are constructional reasons, which perhaps resolve themselves into this; that it wants considerable care in selecting the slates, and that the quarrymen who sell the slates are naturally more anxious for the slates to be sold than for the roof to endure; and as a consequence it often turns out that they shove off on people bad wares. I cannot help thinking that with greater pains a great deal might be done in those countrysides where stone slates may be used. Take for example the city of Oxford, which is such a lamentable example of all kinds of architectural errors and mistakes, and I might almost say crimes. There, some time ago, when they were roofing the new buildings which I am very sorry to say they built there, like Exeter College Chapel, they roofed them with stone slates. The stone slates, they found, year by year began to decay, and all went to the natural limestone dust. The result was they stripped the roofs and stuck green Westmoreland slates on. A very good thing is a green Westmoreland slate, it is said; and so it is in London on a red brick building, but on a grey stone building in Oxford it looks absolutely horrible. That is a very good example of the influence of material on architecture. Roof-coverings that do perfectly well in a certain style and in a certain place are most objectionable in another kind of style and in another place; and it seems to me perfectly clear that if all the colleges in Oxford had formed a committee to arrange about the roof-covering materials of their colleges, they might very easily have got almost into their pockets certain quarries in the neighbourhood or the neighbouring counties, and the result would have been that they might have got a continuous steady supply of the very best stone slates, which would have covered their buildings for hundreds of years, because the thing once started would have gone on. But they were so careless that they did not trouble themselves about it. It was also rather cheaper to roof the buildings with Westmoreland slates than with stone slates.

University College, for example, saved the college the enormous sum of thirty pounds, I believe, in roofing the whole with the thin slates instead of the good ones. I must not dwell too long upon it, but I do earnestly direct your attention as architects to that matter of the roofing material, and especially where possible to get the people to raise some kind of demand for these stone slates. In our own immediate country we used to get slates from a village called Poulton, between Fairford and Cirencester. The Poulton slates were remarkably good at one time, but they are now going off, and all you can get now from Poulton is a sort of coagulated mud which is clearly not to be trusted as a roofing material, although it is nothing like as bad to look at as blue slates, or slates of that kind; and it is rather a hard slate, but it is not thoroughly satisfactory. I have not the slightest doubt that if two or three of the people about there, like the big landowner in my neighbourhood, who is a great patron of the arts and so on, would make an effort and demand these stone slates of a good bed, they would get them; because it would be worth people's while to open the quarries, and at a slight additional expense they might get them from countrysides which are not very remote; but what one sees going on there always is the perpetual worsening, especially in the roofing material of the buildings. It is rather remarkable that they still go on building stone walls for cart-sheds and all sorts of farm buildings, which, as far as the walls are concerned, are not so very bad, especially when they do not want them to be grand, and do not point them in a hideous manner; but the roofing is almost certain nowadays to be either thin blue slate or else that zinc-looking stuff. On the whole, I rather prefer that to blue slate, because you feel you can take it all off in a lump, and shove it on one side.

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As to the use of thatch, I wish you could use it more often than you do. It is used so little that there are now very few thatchers to be got. In fact it is the commonest thing, if you ask a person to do something, to cast lead for example, to hear: "I do not know how to do it; I cannot do it; my grand-

father used to be able to do it." That is not at all an uncommon thing, and that is the road things are going. In point of fact, what has happened there is what happens in other ways, that the town has practically entirely invaded the country, and the countryside is now treated as a kind of back-yard of the counting-house. That is the fact of the matter, and everything is going down-hill as far as the exterior appearance is concerned. There is an agitation on foot just now about getting better houses for the agricultural labourers; but people will have to take great care that instead of getting better houses they do not get worse, which they are very likely to do at the rate they are going now. Some of you must have gone into those villages in Northamptonshire where there are some splendid examples of the old churches, and where the building material is very good; there is, for instance, that stone with an irony cast in it. In those villages you will see that a thing has happened which makes them the most miserable places you can see in the whole country. All the back gardens and yards have been built over with nasty little brick houses with blue slate roofs for the shoe-making trades, and so on. I cannot think that this improves the lodging of the country people, for the building is of the vilest possible description.

To sum up about this roofing material: it seems to me, you have really first of all lead for a good roof-covering; then you have stone slates; you have thatch, and you may have, with some trouble, a good country-made tile. This is an extremely difficult thing to get, mind you, because unfortunately the Broseley tiles are so largely used as an "excellent building material," that the country potters have got worse and worse, and the tiles they provide you with will hardly keep out the wet. That again is another thing that wants a sort of combination of people who have to do with building to insist, as far as they can, on having this material turned out as good as it possibly can be turned out, and to be always worrying and thinking about these things. Well, the tile of course is again a very serious affair, because over a large part of the country tiles, if you could get them good,

are the most convenient roof-covering you can have. When they are good they are very pretty in their own countryside, but I must say I have seen them on what I should call a grey stone countryside, and there I think the tiles even when good are a kind of blight on the landscape. The beautiful greyness of the stone slate, the lovely tone of these old stone houses are better, especially for the home-like landscape you see in that part of the country, than anything that could take its place; it would be a misfortune if you had to use tiles rather than the old stone roofs. But in other parts of the country, tiles would do very well, especially if you have good tiles that weather properly, like some of the old tiles in Kent and Sussex.

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But there is one last material, which I suppose there might be a difficulty about getting a man to accept, but which would be a very good material to use for roof-covering if it can be used in default of other things; and that is oak shingles, which get in very few years to look much the same colour as the stone slates, and the roof and the walls go grey together.

The good materials are then, first lead, if you must or may use it, then stone slates, then tiles, then thatch, and lastly, when you can use it, shingles. The bad materials, which nobody ought to use on pain of not being considered an architect at all, are thin slates and Broseley tiles. I can hardly consider that on an architect's building the use of these materials is a mere blemish; I look upon it rather as a destruction of the whole building as a work of art.

It seems to me that I have given you pretty well all I had to say on the subject of those rough and homely materials that go to make up our houses. I repeat again, I think it is the most important side of architecture altogether, the choice of material and the use of material. There is another thing to be said about it, that it must lead those people who are really seriously interested in it to interest themselves in the methods of using those materials. That has to do especially with matters like masonry. How does it happen, for example, that a restored building (excuse my mentioning that word)

which is very carefully done as to the mouldings and all the rest of it, and is really an absolutely faultless imitation of an Edwardian building, does not look in the faintest degree like an Edwardian building? Many people would say: Because it has got to get old and grey; now it is all new. But I beg to say that is all nonsense; the Edwardian building when brand new did not look like this imitation of the present day. There is no doubt about that, and the reason why it did not look like it is that the whole surface, every moulding, every inch of rubble wall, and what not, was done in a totally different manner; that is to say, the old workmen who did it used to a great extent different tools, and certainly used the tools in a different way. Now if by any possibility the architects could get back the masons and workmen, and what I distinctly call the old scientific method of building walls and surfaces, the really reasonable and scientific method, architecture would to a great extent be on its legs again, and we need not trouble ourselves much about the battle of the styles, if buildings were built in that living manner from beginning to end; out of that the style would arise. We all know of course that you cannot begin by inventing anew, but by attending distinctly to the necessities of the time, and starting at some period, and you must start—you cannot help yourselves—at some period long ago when the art really had roots in it and was not all in the air. Starting with that and attending to the absolute needs of the people who want houses built, and connected with that, with the real solid and genuine use of the material, you would at least get a style which, whatever one may say of it, although it may not build such beautiful buildings as the old buildings, because the whole history of the world has so much changed, would nevertheless produce buildings which would not be ridiculous to the ages which come after us. I am afraid many of those we are building now will be looked upon as mere ingenious toys reflecting a great deal of credit perhaps on the intellect of those who designed them, but very little credit on their good sense and their solidity. You will say that the man

was very clever, but he had terrible difficulties to overcome, and he did in a way overcome them after all. But what he has produced, at the very best, is not a building which really forms part of the living shell and skin of the earth on which we live, but is a mere excrescence upon it, a toy which might almost as well, except for the absolute necessity that the people should have a roof to cover them, have remained simply a nicely executed drawing in the architect's office. What we have to get rid of is especially and particularly that. I suppose that the draughtsmanship of the architects of the thirteenth century for their grander buildings was not particularly splendid or complete; I am perfectly certain that a vast number of very beautiful buildings that are built all over the country never had an architect at all, but the roughest possible draught was made out for those buildings, and that they actually grew up simply without any intermediary between the mind and the hands of the people who actually built them. No doubt the great reason why that was so was because the people who built them were traditionally acquainted with the best means of using the materials which happily for them they were forced to use; the materials that were all round about them in the fields and woods amidst which they passed their lives.

Influence of Building Materials upon Architecture

ON THE EXTERNAL COVERINGS OF ROOFS. WRITTEN FOR THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS. 1890.

THERE is nothing more important in the aspect of the exterior of a building than the covering of its roof: for, broadly speaking, in these northern countries all buildings show a roof above their walls, and that roof being usually much less broken by change of material or ornament than the walls, its material is especially obvious to view. Moreover, the smaller and more unpretentious a building is, the more effect the roof has in producing a pleasant-looking building: so that if the roofs of the many thousands of small houses throughout the country were of beautiful materials, we should have to-day comparatively little to complain of, and especially the beautiful landscape of the countrysides in England would escape the marring which it now almost always receives from ordinary modern houses. This should be well known and constantly acted on by all those who wish to produce beautiful or sightly building, but unfortunately there is nothing which is more generally neglected by architects nowadays than this question of roof-coverings: while on the other hand the ease of carriage has made inferior materials so cheap, that everywhere mere utilitarian buildings stand little chance of escaping the roof of thin Welsh blue slates or Staffordshire "improved" tiles.

Now in the Middle Ages (or indeed down to the end of the eighteenth century) all roof-coverings were more or less good. Lead (properly cast and of a due thickness), oak shingles, well-made red tiles, which weathered beautifully, straw or reed thatch, stone slates or slabs, or at the worst slates smaller, thicker, and less mechanically dressed than those now in use, made it almost impossible for a roof to be really ugly, and more often insured its being actually beautiful. The older parts of Edinburgh, for instance, owe much of their good looks to the houses being roofed with

small, thick, dark-coloured slates, and wherever we come across one of the old houses where these have been supplanted by modern thin slates, an obvious disastrous hole in the line of houses is the result. Again, how much of the charm of the pattern old English villages is (one must say almost was, so fast are they disappearing) due to their thatched roofs, which look always the better, the neater and trimmer they are kept. The same thing may be said of numberless little buildings in the various districts of England, such as Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Gloucestershire, and the western parts of Oxfordshire and Berkshire, in which stone slabs or beautiful stone slates were universally used till about sixty years ago: many of these farmhouses, cottages, and barns, &c., being quite destitute of any ornament, but unfailingly beautiful, because of the material of their roofs. The contrast between the old and the new in this respect may well be noted in the old villages of Northamptonshire; Rothwell, for example, where the old cottages are worthy fellows to the magnificent mediæval church, and seem, so to say, to have grown out of the ground by the same process as it has, while modern sordidness and brutality have covered the sites of the cottage gardens with blue-slated abortions built as man-sties for the poor shoe-makers who now largely people the place. With the mere utilitarian element it is difficult for our Society to deal, especially as this side of the subject has only an indirect influence upon the preservation of ancient buildings; smallness of immediate cost will, in spite of anything we can say, determine the use of the abominable blue slates in most such cases; but we would at least appeal to the architects, and guardians of old buildings, and ask them to consider what a great stretch of material, good or bad, a high-pitched roof makes, and what a difference there is between good and bad in this matter; the bad such a perpetual eyesore, that it keeps one from enjoying the old work, and almost brings it under the category of a ruin (that is, makes it a mutilated building, interesting more as an archæological

On the External Coverings of Roofs

study than a work of art); the good of itself beautiful, and furthermore harmonious with the ancient walls and gables. We ask all who have to do with repairing old buildings to consider it not so much undesirable as impossible to supplant a good roof-covering by a bad one; to consider it impossible that Broseley tiles can be used in place of good well-weathering old tiles; that neither slates, green or blue, nor tiles, can possibly take the place of stone slabs or stone slates on any buildings with which they have anything to do.

Furthermore, though, as above said, it may seem out of our province to speak of any modern buildings, yet we claim an old village as a unit of ancient building, and we earnestly beg any one who is putting up a necessary new building in such a place to do the like; one or two incongruous roofs of the kind we are thinking of will destroy the greater part of the beauty of the whole village, and miles of lovely landscape with it; and there are many villages in which the well-meant efforts of a landowner (as interpreted by his steward), in trying to better the dwellings of the village, have resulted in taking away all the beauty and character from the country dwelling-place, and making it as ugly and unmeaning as the Squire's own sham classic or sham baronial mansion. It is the same with these old villages as with a great Gothic church: if the old cottages, barns, and the like, are kept in good repair from year to year, they will not need to be pulled down to give place either to the red-brick blue-slated man-sty, or the model modern-Tudor lord-bountiful cottage. And where, as aforesaid, new buildings must be built, by building them well, and in a common-sense and unpretentious way, with the good material of the countryside, they will take their place alongside of the old houses and look, like them, a real growth of the soil.

We think it well in conclusion to make our meaning in this necessarily brief space clearer by adding a list of the good roof-coverings side by side with the bad; premising always that if any regard is to be had to the general beauty

of the landscape, the natural material of the special country-side should be used instead of imported material.

Good Roof-Coverings	Bad Roof-Coverings
Cast Lead (of course for expensive and stately buildings).	Milled Lead.
Oak Shingles (once universal in woodland countries).	
Good Hand-made Well-Baked Plain Tiles.	Broseley mechanically-made Tiles (thin, brittle, always weathering ugly).
Good Pantiles (as in many old farm buildings and sheds near London).	
Stone Slabs (as in Yorkshire, Derbyshire, &c.).	
Stone Slates (as in Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Berks, North Lincolnshire, &c. These when good make the most beautiful of any roof-covering).	Thin Welsh Blue Slates (one of the greatest curses of the age).
Green Westmoreland Slates (mostly to be used in towns and with brick buildings).	
Grey and Dark-Grey Slates (as in parts of Scotland, North France, &c., but these are small and thick).	Corrugated Galvanized Iron and Zinc (now spreading like a pestilence over the country).
Thatch, Straw and Reed (the latter very enduring and much preferable to the straw).	

WESTMINSTER ABBEY. WRITTEN FOR THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS IN JUNE, 1893.

WE feel ourselves compelled to call the attention of the public to the present condition and immediate prospects of the Church of St. Peter at Westminster: and this seems to us to be all the more necessary, because the public have scarcely understood the really important considerations which should be kept in mind in dealing with this piece of national property. The idea that is current in most people's minds seems to be that, apart from its function as a place of worship, it is to be used in some way or other as a kind of registration office for the names of men whom the present generation considers eminent in various capacities: the method of so registering them being the placing of a monument to their honour in the church and sometimes burying their corpses beneath the pavement. That this strange notion, which seems to have first taken root about the end of the seventeenth century, and was in full vigour all through the eighteenth and the earlier part of this century, is still alive in most men's minds, is clear from this fact, that now, when even the Dean and Chapter of Westminster have declared that burials in the Abbey must cease, and when it is clear to the most casual observer that the Church is crowded to absurdity with specimens of the gravestone-cutter's art, the public still think that the corpses of notorieties should be buried and their memories noted, if not in the Abbey, yet at any rate in some building contiguous to it, which is, if possible, to make a pretence of being a part of it. The result of this feeling in the public has been that more than one scheme has been elaborated for providing space for this registration of notables in connection with the Abbey; of which it may be said that the best of them seemed likely to do not much harm to the remains of the ancient Abbey outside the Church, and that the worst intended the actual destruction of part of the Church itself

by pulling down the wall of the north aisle in order to foist a nineteenth-century imitation of thirteenth-century architecture on to us as a part of the ancient building. Westminster Abbey

Moreover, it must be said that the ordinary visitor to the Abbey goes there not to see the Church, but the monuments of all kinds that it contains, and the Dean and Chapter understand this so well, that while they throw obstacles in the way of those who want to study the architecture, they arrange for the following the round of the monuments, mostly in the company of a showman after the fashion of Mrs. Jarley.

It must be said furthermore that the building suffers from the neglect of the most ordinary measures for keeping it clean and neat, and though it is true that it is difficult to struggle with London filth, yet its worst evils might at least be minimized. If the revenues of the Chapter are insufficient for dealing with this disadvantage, a public subscription might be opened for the purpose.

We fear, therefore, that in following out this curious superstition of the last two centuries, that it is necessary that Westminster Abbey should serve the purpose of a "National Valhalla," the public have neglected all other uses to which this building might serve, except that of a place for the decent celebration of the services of the Church of England; and that they are careless of what damage the Church may suffer, so long as it fulfils these two offices. But this carelessness, as a matter of course, extends to the injury which Westminster Abbey may receive at the hands of those who do see another use for it, viz., the literal reconstruction of lost or damaged features of the architecture of its earlier life—the "restoration," as it has been called, of the art of a period very different from ours.

Externally at least, this great Church has, from one reason or another, suffered more from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than most others of its size and dignity: being situated in the centre of government of this country, it has not enjoyed the advantages of boorish neglect which

have left so much of interest in mediæval buildings in remoter parts of the country. Every generation, after the decay of living organic art, has added its quota to the degradation of the building. Setting aside the destruction of furniture and decorations which as a matter of course took place under the two Puritan upheavals, and which was not so complete here as in some churches, the repairs or renewals done at different periods before our own, by men who had no sympathy with the original work, have been sufficiently disastrous to the exterior. The heavy hand of the academical classical architect has been more or less all over the building outside. The north transept, which in the time of Hollar, if one may judge from his curious nondescript engraving, was in a genuine condition, though possibly needing repair greatly, was reduced to the due commonplace ugliness which was then thought to be impressively respectable; the western towers omitted by the mediæval builders were supplied in the same style, having been probably designed by Wren and carried out by Hawksmoor, and remain in good condition, as monuments of the incapacity of seventeenth and eighteenth-century architects to understand the work of their forefathers; and perhaps one might say that they furnish a wholesome lesson to future ages not to attempt the imitation of a past epoch of art. If the architect or architects of these towers had left the Gothic alone and had built the new towers in the queer style of driven-into-a-corner Classic, which is that of the City church towers of or about that date, they certainly would not have jarred our sense of congruity so much as the quasi-Gothic existing ones do, and also, which is a great point, they would not have been so ugly. Wren's "restoration" of the south clerestory also was to be seen a year or two ago; this had to do with the ornamental features of the windows, which were reduced to the Bible and Prayer-book style of the period, but left the main surface of the walling alone.

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw an important degradation, in the rebuilding of the exterior of

Henry VII.'s Chapel by Wyatt—the type of the architects of the first period of Gothic knowledge, who were far more destructive than those of Gothic "ignorance," and moreover had no style of their own, and give us examples of the very extreme of academical lifelessness. Mr. Wyatt managed to take all the romance out of the exterior of this most romantic work of the late Middle Ages, and has left us little more than a caput mortuum, an office study of the exterior of the Chapel. Westminster Abbey

Blore began in 1809 the recasing of the north aisle of the Church, a work which was finished by Gilbert Scott: the two between them completely destroyed all trace of the handiwork of the mediæval masons in this part of the Church.

All these degradations belong to the time before the genuine "restoration" mania fell upon Westminster Abbey; they are well meant, ill-conceived, and disastrous pieces of repair of various degrees of stupidity, culminating in the last mentioned wholesale destruction of the thirteenth-century masons' work.

Sir Gilbert (then Mr.) Scott was appointed architect of the Abbey in 1849, by which time the second period of architectural Gothic "knowledge" had arrived. He "carefully restored" the Chapter House, that is, he made it (we are speaking of the exterior now) a modern building, imitating with about as much success as is possible in such cases the work of the thirteenth century. It has no longer any claim to be considered a work of art; it is the architect's architecture, the work of the office, in which the executants are in no degree taken into council.

The work of "restoring" the exterior of the Church was carried on by Mr. Pearson. His work on the south side of the Church is now pretty much complete, and is of the same quality as Sir Gilbert Scott's. But not satisfied with the eighteenth-century transmogrification of the north transept (who could be?) and driven by the necessity of making some structural repairs, he carried on the idea of making a conjectural restoration of the north transept, which was begun

by Sir Gilbert Scott. This work has now been accomplished, and he who runs may read.

The result is most unsatisfactory. Admitting that the eighteenth-century work was in no way good as an independent work of architecture, it was nevertheless done by men who put some of their own thought into it, poor as that was; moreover, they had not learned how to forge thirteenth-century architecture, and they had retained the outline of the old work, so that between what the eighteenth century left and what it produced, it was of some historical value at least. Its artistic value chiefly lay in the fact, that owing to the action of wind and weather, the surface of it was not unpleasant; and altogether it was so little distracting, that it was no bad preparation to the visitor for the solemn beauty of the interior of the Church.

The work that has taken its place is, as it was bound to be, with such ideas leading its architects, another example of the dead-alive office work of the modern restoring architect, overflowing with surface knowledge of the mediæval work in every detail, but devoid of historic sympathy and true historical knowledge, and with no other aim in view than imitating the inimitable. But this example of the error is made more palpable and absurd by the fact that it is an imitation of very ornate thirteenth-century work, including abundance of figure sculpture. Now we must remind our readers that the free carved ornament of the Middle Ages (whether of figures or not) was the handiwork of artists, and whatever their shortcomings might have been, they were expected to, and did express their own conceptions with their own hands; they were undoubtedly the best artists of their time for the work in hand; they belonged to no inferior rank of artists, that is, but were the leaders of their art; there were no artists above them, doing work more intellectual and educated. Their productions, therefore, were always genuine works of art, whatever their relative merits might be.

Nor is that all; they were working under the full in-

fluence of traditions unbroken since the very first beginnings of art on this planet; they were entirely unable to feign themselves other than they were, artists of their own day: any real artist of the present time will at once be able to see what an advantage this was to them; that the bond of tradition was so far from being a fetter, that it left them truly free to give form to their thought according to their own wishes. Their works still speak for them, and show us what a great body of artists of the highest skill and sense of beauty was at work amidst the scanty populations of mediæval Europe. Westminster Abbey

It is clear then that the mediæval architect, master builder, abbot, or whoever else planned the building, could never have been at a serious loss for skilful men to decorate his building according to the fashion of the time. Let us turn the page and see how it stands with us now in this matter. There are undoubtedly many clever sculptors (or modellers, rather, for they do not as a rule carve their own work) in civilized countries; but the capacity for designing and executing the subsidiary forms of carved ornament has completely departed from those countries on the one hand, while on the other, the sculptors aforesaid are divorced from architectural or ornamental work, and most of them would consider themselves treated with less than due consideration if they were asked to undertake it. The few instances in which they have timidly attempted to get into some relation with architecture have had such poor results as clearly to show how difficult it is for them to produce any work which is not merely isolated and unornamental.

This is so obvious to the architects in need of carved work for their imitative restorations that they never even attempt to employ artists on their work; but a supply has sprung up to meet the demand, and workmen are employed to produce imitative Gothic sculpture in which they have no interest, and of the spirit of whose prototypes they have no understanding; the tangible result of this being what is called ecclesiastical sculpture, so utterly without life or interest

that nobody who passes under the portal of the church on which it is plastered, treats it as a work of art any more than he does the clergyman's surplice within the building.

The restoring architect therefore is in this dilemma, that what there is of skilful and original sculpture is not fit for his purpose, and will not make ornament; and that what he can have, and which professes to be ornament, has no artistic value. What is to be done in such a case? The common-sense view of it would be that he had better forgo the ornament. But here he is met by the difficulty that he has set out to make a scientific imitation of, say, a French portal of the thirteenth century, and such portals always had sculpture of such and such subjects on them, so that his restoration will not be thorough unless he has the due amount of quasi-ornament to show. Therefore in the teeth of reason and logic he is compelled to accept the makeshift for the real thing, and as a consequence to leave his work bedizened rather than ornamented.

That this has necessarily been the case with the new front of the north transept at Westminster must be obvious to any one who understands art; and in spite of all the knowledge and skill of the architects it could not have been otherwise, considering the point they started from. If any such person doubts this, let him compare the new imagery of the porches with the angels high up in the transept within; or let him look at any piece of genuine carving there and compare it with the subsidiary work in the porch; and he will surely see in every line of the first the vigour and pleasure of the hand of the workman, and in the other a joyless putty-like imitation that had better have been a plaster cast.

To sum up then the case of the outside of Westminster Abbey: a long series of blunders of various kinds, all based on a false estimate of the true value of the building, have damaged it so vitally, that scarcely any of its original surface remains, and we have nothing left us but a mere outline, a ghost, so to say, of what it was. A great misfortune truly,

and an irreparable one. What else is left us of the Abbey Church that is still so valuable that we are in a trouble of anxiety lest this also should be taken away from us? Westminster Abbey

In a few words the interior of the Church is left to us; and this, while the exterior has suffered so grievously as to have been all but entirely destroyed, has been less damaged than many other great churches. In fact, were it not for the result of the mania for monuments, that as aforesaid has been so recklessly indulged in up to the present moment, the interior of the Abbey Church would be comparatively in a very good condition, and would leave little to be desired save the clearing away of the imitative and unoriginal stained glass which has got into the windows at various times, to the great damage of the effect of the church. As to the monuments once more, the burden of their ugliness must be endured, at any rate until the folly of restoration has died out. For the greater part of them have been built into the fabric, and their removal would leave gaps, not so unsightly indeed as these stupid masses of marble, but tempting to the restorer, who would not be contented with merely patching them decently, but would make them excuses for further introduction of modern work. In short, disastrous and disgraceful as these pieces of undertaker's upholstery are, and though they make us a laughing-stock among nations for our folly in having permitted them to blemish the Church, they protect us from the still greater disaster of the platitudinizing of the whole interior by a "thorough restoration."

It is the rumour of the contemplation of this "thorough restoration" which makes this memorandum of our Society necessary, and we shall have presently to recur to it: but we must first write a few words of recapitulation and of definite explanation of the position of our Society in regard to this matter.

We have stated that amidst the neglect of the general public which Westminster Abbey lies under, there are two views taken of it. The first, that it is a convenient receptacle

for the monuments of the notorieties that rise up, wax, wane, and set from time to time.

The second, that it is a good piece for the exercise and exhibition of the skill of the modern architect, and his scientific knowledge of the methods of design and building of the Middle Ages, which is so complete that it enables him to surmount at one stride the difficulties created by the long lapse of years, and the complete change in ideas and the structure of society, which it has brought about: that in short, Westminster Abbey can be renewed in our time, and that, being renewed, it will be the same Westminster Abbey which the eyes of Chaucer beheld when he was yet in the flesh. Those we say are two views: is there no third? Yes, there is the view of this Society, which can be stated easily and shortly. It is this: Westminster Abbey in spite of all injuries is a great work of art, valuable to all succeeding generations as long as it holds together; and it can by patience, pains and good judgment be held together for an indefinite time. Moreover the art of it is inextricably interwoven with the history which has in fact produced it. It may seem strange to some that whereas we can give some distinguished name as the author of almost every injury it has received, the authors of this great epic itself have left no names behind them. For indeed it is the work of no one man, but of the people of south-east England, working in the manner which the traditions of the ages forced upon them. And that is the reason why we must accept as irreparable those injuries which it has received, and which we lament so much. It was the work of the inseparable will of a body of men, who worked as they lived, because they could do no otherwise, and unless you can bring those men back from the dead, you cannot "restore" one verse of their epic. Rewrite the lost trilogies of Aeschylus, put a beginning and an end to the "Fight at Finsbury," finish the Squire's tale for Chaucer, even if you cannot

> "call up him that left half-told
> The story of Cambuscan bold,"

and if you can succeed in that, you may then "restore" Westminster Abbey. Westminster Abbey

But though you cannot restore it, you can preserve it. And we must tell you that to do less than this is to involve yourselves in a great national stupidity, a national crime in fact. For this at least you can do, whatever the condition of the arts among us may be. Care and commonsense will enable you to do that without the expenditure of any great faculty for the production of art.

Lastly, if we are asked if it be worth while to take this trouble, and what is the importance of this piece of architecture, as architecture, or what rank Westminster Abbey takes as a work of art, we can only say, that apart from all the glamour which history and tradition have cast over it, it is a building second to none amongst all the marvels of architectural beauty produced by the Middle Ages. Like all such buildings, its beauty is convincing, and sets criticism aside. And the man who is not moved by it must have resigned the human faculty of letting his eyes convey ideas to his brain.

We must now mention the rumour of "restoration" of the interior which has alarmed us. Something is certainly in contemplation: but what it is, whether it be needful repair or destructive restoration, we cannot tell you. And this for a very definite reason. Having, in common with the rest of the public, heard the rumour, we thought that we were bound by our position before the public to refuse to accept mere hearsay, and to obtain definite, detailed, reliable information from the delegated guardians of the Abbey, the Dean and Chapter. We wrote to that body, then, simply as a part of the public that wished for information, and we were met by a refusal to give any information—we must suppose, because the Dean and Chapter misunderstood us, and thought we considered them responsible to us, and not to the public at large, as we certainly do consider them. We can only express a hope that they will tell the public what they intend doing with what is really, if not legally, a piece of national property, as speedily and as directly as they can.

It is in this hope that we have delayed calling public

attention to the matter for so long; but we feel that it will not admit of indefinite delay, and accordingly put our views before the public.

If we are asked what should be done, our reply is very simple. We believe that one architect, however distinguished and learned, is too heavily burdened by having the sole charge of the Abbey in his hands. We think that a consultation should be called of the best practical architects, builders, and engineers, and that they should report as to the stability of the fabric and what means should be taken to render it thoroughly secure; and, a satisfactory scheme having been agreed on, funds should be obtained from Parliament, or if that were not possible, by subscription from the public at large, for carrying it out without delay. But we are also sure that such a scheme should disclaim most emphatically any intention of meddling with the ornamental features of the building.

The structural stability having been secured, the Abbey should be kept clean, and otherwise not be touched at all. That is the only thing to do, and there is no second course which would not lead to fresh disaster. Let bygones be bygones, but do not let us enter on a second series of alterations and improvements which will deprive us at last of all that is now left us of our most beautiful building.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE DISTRIBUTION OF PRIZES TO STUDENTS OF THE BIRMINGHAM MUNICIPAL SCHOOL OF ART ON FEB. 21, 1894.

IT seems to me that my address falls naturally into two parts: that I have first to speak to the general public about the Art which your School represents, and next I have to speak to the students of the School about their position and aims. As to the first part, I fear some of you may think I am telling an old story once more; a story of which you are tired of hearing, if I am not tired of telling it. For, to say the truth, we are not yet quite on the right road towards a satisfactory condition of Art. When I say "we," I do not mean this country in especial; for, indeed, at home here we are somewhat better off than in other civilized countries, though at first sight it may not seem so, owing to the fact that in France, Germany, Italy, and elsewhere, there are still more or less survivals from the foregoing periods, during which Art was common to the whole people. But those survivals are being extinguished under our very eyes, and in the course of a few years there will be nothing more interesting, e.g., in the peasant life of Italy, than in that of England or America. All nations of us must go through the mill in which the commercial period is grinding us; and England has at least this advantage: that she was thrown into the hopper first, and as a consequence is showing signs of consciousness that there is a future for Art. In short, we are willing to rebel against the tyranny compounded of utilitarianism and dilettantism, which for the greater part of this century has forbidden all life in Art. Only as yet we do not quite know what form our rebellion is to take; nor do I feel that in this business I can do more than generalize; for, in fact, if we already knew in detail what to do toward the furtherance of Art, that would mean that we were practising Art, and should not want to talk

about it: people do not talk about matters that are going smoothly.

As to my generalizations, I can only say, first, that, in order to have a living school of Art, the public in general must be interested in Art; it must be a part of their lives; something which they can no more do without than water or lighting. We must not be able to plead poverty or necessity, as we do now, as an excuse for ugliness or dirt. If we raise a building, whether it be palace, factory, or cottage, it must be a thing well understood that it must be sightly: if a railway has to be run from one place to another, it must be taken for granted that the minimum of destruction of natural beauty must be incurred, even if that should increase the expense of the line largely; disfiguring waste of coal-pits or manufactories must be got rid of, whatever the cost may be; and so on. And, mind you, all this need of real public convenience, which is the only possible foundation for Art in modern times, is quite possible to be done; and it will be done, so soon as people care about it. To put the matter quite plainly, as things go now we are, as a community, contented to be publicly poor so long as some of us are privately rich; therefore, though the income of the country is enormous in figures, no man of us can go a few yards from his own door without seeing the tokens of quite desperate public poverty. Now I admit that within the last dozen of years there are signs of healthy discontent with this monstrous discrepancy between our powers and our practice; and in one direction, especially, a new spirit has arisen, which, to begin with, has given us instruments through which the revolt against stupid utilitarianism can work. I am alluding to the development of municipal life amongst us. Without flattery, and as a matter of fact, I can say that of course I know how this city has for long taken a leading part in this development. But now we are seeing, what I think some of us scarcely expected to see, London playing its part herein; and that, in spite of its being so weighted by its unmanageable size, and its position as a

centre of government, of politics, and of intelligence; that is to say, in spite of its being the very representative, of all places in the world, of the commercial epoch. Whatever mistakes the London County Council has made, or will make, I am sure that it is awake to the fact that it owes to the citizens some account of the external decency of our brick-and-mortar county; and there is a feeling in the air (which used to be neither in the air nor anywhere else) that something may be done, even in these passing years, to make life better worth living in London. In short, we Londoners, who were once but citizens of the world, are now learning to be citizens of London also, as we surely ought to be; for, indeed, we have a certain amount of our own business to attend to, as well as other people's business.

All things considered, then, I believe, in a growing sense, that it is a disgrace to a period in which civilized mankind has attained to such mastery over the forces of Nature, that the commonwealth should be poor. Again, I say that such a feeling is, and must be, the basis of modern Art striving to free itself from the thraldom of utilitarianism, and "the Correggiosity of Correggio." How are we to work on that basis? In considering the question, I will, for a while, look upon the hopes of Art in these islands as the subject matter; and it is a more than sufficiently big one. And, first, let us dispose of the dictum, which used to be popular in dilettante circles, that the English are essentially a non-artistic people. I must call that a good deal less than a half-truth, and you have only got to go to the first (unrestored) mediæval building you can get at to test that view of the subject. As a matter of fact, until Art failed throughout civilization, the English had a very definite style of art of their own, which closely expressed their thoughts and their lives, and of which beauty, almost, it seems to us, unsought for, was an essential part; while as far as our own days go, it is, as I have said before, to non-artistic England that some glimmer of insight into the possible future of Art has come.

In short, it is no use going further afield than this country to find the artists and craftsmen that we need: when you find them you will undoubtedly find that they have shortcomings which those of other countries have not; but also they will have their own special excellences, which we had better make the most of.

Now, further, I believe that the capacity for Art, and the desire for it, are not yet extinct among us; yet they are mostly dormant. People in general, who do not earn their livelihood by using their eyes, do not use them; which, of course, considering the state of the popular arts amongst us, saves them a great deal of suffering, and probably lengthens their lives. But I fear that we cannot leave them to their negative happiness: if we are to make anything of Art, we must awaken in them that "divine discontent" which is the mother of improvement in mankind. I have already admitted, indeed, that this awakening is beginning; but to me it seems that it is only amongst a very few, and chiefly amongst artists in the narrower sense of the word, that this discontent is the result of the actual use of the eyes. With the others of the discontented, it is the result of intelligent reasoning: what might be called political understanding, as opposed to artistic. I do not undervalue this side of things, and it is indeed necessary that those who live chiefly by the eyes, should be able to use their intelligence also in dealing with matters of art; but, nevertheless, the essential thing is that people generally should be capable of receiving impressions through the eyes, and this process should be a joy to them, just as their receiving impressions from their palates, or their ears. This is, of course, only stating the obvious fact, that the pleasure taken in art is primarily sensuous; an obvious fact, yet not so obvious but that it is generally forgotten now-a-days.

Well, this being so, the necessity for using our eyes, if we are to be artists, having been admitted, the question comes, How are we to get people to use their eyes, always keeping in mind the fact that for some time after they have

begun to do so they will be a torment to themselves and their neighbours? as I am.

Address to Birmingham Students

That is the real question we have to consider this evening. And I begin to answer it by saying that we who have not lost the use of our eyes should go on pestering the rest of the public until we have more or less convinced them that it would be a good thing for them to recover the capacity of seeing, just as it would be a good thing to recover the use of their legs if they were lame; and remember that, as in the case of eyesight, the non-seeing ones may plead that if they could see, it would give them trouble and pain, so, in the matter of legs, they might also plead that by gaining the capacity of walking they would incur the pain and labour of going afoot.

Well, having convinced our blind neighbours that it is a good thing to see, I think we should have won half the battle; because those who want to see, and do not really lack eyes, but only the habit of using them, can get to see, sooner or later, that is, can acquire the habit of seeing. And we who have not lost that habit are there to help them. Now, I have had a considerable experience in the art of propaganda, and I have, in the course of it, found out this, that, having enunciated your first thesis, you must not wait till you have converted all people to that before you put out your second and your third, and proceed to act as if the said first were already accepted. So let us go by this experience now, and assume that we all agree (though we do not) that it is a good thing to have the full use of our eyes, and are prepared to endure the pain, as well as to enjoy the pleasure, which that use will give us; that we are, in short, prepared to accept the responsibility of being human beings in the full possession of healthy senses.

That being accepted, there comes, I say, the question as to how those who have not the use of their eyes, and desire to gain it, can be helped by those who have the said use. A far more difficult question to answer than some of you may think. Nay, a question which cannot be answered unless peo-

ple are seriously longing to be blind no longer, and are ready to pay the full price, both in money, and in trouble, and disturbance of a quiet life, which that (to my mind) inestimable gain will bring with it.

Now, I say that there are two things to be done by the seers for the non-seers: the first is to show them what is to be seen on the earth; and the next to give them opportunities for producing matters, the sight of which will please themselves and their neighbours, and the people that come after them. To train them, in short, in the observation and creation of beauty and incident.

What, then, is worth seeing on the earth? In one word, everything: this to love and foster, and that to hate and destroy. The results of the greed, tyranny and injustice of man, of his folly, as the old Jew called it, these must be looked at in the face, as well as the results of his aspirations and his love. It is not to be lamented, but rejoiced in, that all those evil deeds of man, which I should sum up in the one word unneighbourliness, should leave their stain upon the Art which has struggled through them, or should leave the aching void of no-art when their slavery has been strong enough to destroy it; and, moreover, the disgust and grief with which we must regard these disgraces will, when we know the causes of them, give us assured hope of the reward of fresh pleasure of the eyes that will accompany every casting off of the follies which still beset us.

But to-day I will not say much of those things which the eyes bid us hate, all the more as this is a festive occasion, and as also one ought to have more to say on the things which the eyes bid us to love, and which are less understood than the horrors above-said. Of these things which we of the present day ought especially to turn our eyes to for pleasure, there are, I take it, two kinds: the beauties of Nature, and the beauties of Art. Of the first, considered purely by themselves, I will say little: mainly this, that our fault in respect of regarding these is that for the most part

we refuse to pay attention to anything in Nature which is not tremendous and exciting; it must be an Alpine pass, or a rocky sea shore, or the richness and luxury of an Italian landscape, or at the least a piece of mountain in Scotland or Wales: less than that will scarcely draw our eyes to beholding. Now, who would not be moved at such scenes as these? Yet, I must tell you that, if you can get no pleasure out of the sight of a Warwickshire meadow, or the hedgerows and little waving hills of my native Essex, or the flat fields and limestone banks of my adopted Oxfordshire-Berkshire land, I say, if these be nothing to you I doubt your capacity for really seeing the huge Swiss mountain and valley scenery, or the flank of the Apennine, or the fairy-land of the Garda Lake, or the terror of the Thrasymene. In short, what our modern landscape visitors usually fail to see, is a certain something which we call "character," which does not depend on either bigness, or roughness, or richness; a something which means the expression of a human interest, the telling of a tale of life and incident, one may say, the touching the imagination through the eye. Here, then, is already a gain for the purblind, if we can give them this faculty of seeing character in landscape; indeed, a far greater gain than the mere words just spoken can give you any idea of. By dint of this gain, almost every "flat and uninteresting country" (as the phrase goes) is all changed, and becomes a fairyland full of beauty and interest; and the lead of our ordinary English landscape becomes pure gold. Indeed, I will promise to any one of you that goes with open eyes some month or two hence into any unspoiled country-side, that you will find almost every field's end a paradise that will cry out to you in a voice not to be resisted: "Love the earth which you dwell upon, and the soil which nourishes you."

And, surely, when we have gained by the use of our eyes such ineffable pleasure as this, we shall no longer plead poverty for failing to keep this inheritance of our fathers free from spoiling and degradation; we shall not allow the

passing convenience of the minute to deprive us all of what at least should be public property, to wit, the beauty of the face of the land.

Now perhaps you will say that, even so far, I have not been speaking of the simple unblended works of Nature. That is true. In all old civilized countries, even when we are in the country, out of sight of a single house, the aspect of the place is largely influenced by the work of man: the hedge-rows, the road, the lanes leading out of it, the trees which have all been planted by men's hands, the growing crops, the tame beasts and sheep, the banked and locked river, all these go to making up the loveliness which lies before us. But, besides all that, it is seldom in England that we can be out of sight of a house, never out of memory of one seen but a little while ago. So here we are brought at once to that transition between works of Nature and of Art, wherein each plays its own part, and which, when they are happily harmonized, produce the greatest pleasure that the eye can have, and appeal most directly to the imagination. For in these landscapes, which include building, we have before us history in its most delightful, and even, I will say, its most instructive, shape. And, furthermore, in such landscapes England (in all country-sides which have not been ruined by our artificial poverty) is fruitful; for both the circumstances of life in the Middle Ages in England, and the genius of our forefathers led them specially to what I should call the embroidery of the general face of the country. If we lacked, as we did, the romance of the great walled towns of the continent, we had as a compensation abundance of ancient villages with their small but beautiful churches, full of individuality and character, and their generously-built manor houses and homesteads, which, between them all, once made an English country-side a special treasure not to be seen anywhere else. And grievous as has been the injury to this treasure-store, much as we have been robbed of it by our own folly and blindness, there is still enough of

it left to teach us and delight us. And, mind you, here I am not speaking of the magnificent cathedrals of England, or the beautiful ruins of those vast monastic houses which still exist in the Yorkshire valleys, and otherwhere: those, like the mountains and lakes aforesaid are, I will not say generally valued, but at least generally catalogued by the public; but I am speaking of the familiar houses and little country churches which are scattered all over the land, most of the former of course not being actually mediæval, but traditionally fit and beautiful. Here, again, I say, if you do not feel the beauty of the little grey cottage, which has stood so many storms and evil days, and is still sound and trim; or of the little village church, brimful of the history of six centuries, you cannot feel that of the stately cathedral. And these, above all things, we want to get people to see with their eyes, and to value according to the amount of pleasure which they will get from them when their eyes are open. And, once again, as in the case of the fields and woods and hillsides, when they are in the full enjoyment of this pleasure, surely they will not forgo it for fear of that artificial poverty which is an affair as purely conventional as the beauty of our ancient buildings is real and substantial. Yet you must not suppose that I am an advocate of the tumble-down picturesque. Keep your village houses weathertight, trim, and useful; and where you must, build others beside them: but why, when you build these, should you make them specimens of the worst buildings in the worst suburbs of a modern town? Even in the passing day, if you build them solidly and unpretentiously, using good materials natural to their own country-side, and if you do not stint the tenant of due elbow-room and garden, it is little likely that you will have done any offence to the beauty of the country-side or the older houses in it. Indeed, I have a hope that it will be from such necessary, unpretentious buildings that the new and genuine architecture will spring, rather than from our experiments in

conscious style more or less ambitious, or those for which the immortal Dickens has given us the never-to-be-forgotten adjective "Architectooralooral."

Now this matter of the proper understanding of Architecture is at the present moment of such overwhelming importance in the consideration of the future of the Arts that I must say a few more words about it, even though it be in parenthesis. I mean, in plain terms, that the manner in which our buildings, and especially our houses, are built is really the foundation of the whole question of Art; and that, if we cannot build fit and beautiful (not necessarily highly decorated) houses, we cannot have Art at all in our days. Reflect on it! A picture may be hidden in a drawing-room; a book may remain unopened on a library shelf; a drawing or engraving shut up in a portfolio; but a house is always in evidence to injure every passer-by by its badness, or benefit him by its goodness. Neither can any work of art, not even the greatest work of art, a beautiful woman, look well in a bad house. Now that being the case, and our modern houses being undeniably, and even it would seem, wilfully, bad, for the most part, let us I beg of you once more take every care of our old buildings, which are good. I say every care: not only do not pull them down in the interest of railways, manufactories, public-houses, and the like; but mend them so as to keep them weather-tight, and then leave them genuine. The history of what is called "restoration," of which I really must say a few words, gives such a curious instance of the non-use of the eyesight, that, apart from other matters, it quite belongs to the question.

From the time of Elizabeth to that of George IV the people of this country (indeed, of all Europe), though they had certain architectural (or at times architectooralooral) tastes, were not in the least moved by the masterpieces of Mediæval Art; in point of fact, since they did not use their eyes on them, and since they were rejoicing at first in their newly-recovered treasure of classical learning, and later on in the acquirement of science so-called, they

considered these mouldering heaps of stone to be mere relics of barbarism. In passing, I may say that the French travels of that very shrewd man of business and very complete Philistine, Arthur Young, give us an excellent measure of this stupidity. About the beginning of this century, a few people began to open their eyes to Mediæval Art, of whom by far the most remarkable was Walter Scott; and his obviously genuine love for these works, combined with the conventional idea that they were "barbarous," produced some curious and amusing passages in his books. However, admiration for the Gothic buildings grew, till at last people began to think that they would like to have some more like them, and tried it with very small success, though they were mightily pleased by their attempts. Again came a period which learned so much more about the Gothic style, as it was once called, that great and successful architects practised in it, producing buildings which did no great harm, when they did not take the place of old buildings. But in another direction this new knowledge had very bad consequences. By this time our ancient buildings, having been both neglected and ill-treated by many generations, needed serious repair in many cases. The distinguished architects abovesaid undertook these repairs, and, as repairs, often did them very well. But they also undertook to re-do literally those parts which the neglect and stupidity aforesaid had injured or even obliterated, and seemed to have no doubt that they could do so. And they knew so much about the old buildings and the ways of their builders, that I cannot much wonder at their temerity. But what I do rather wonder at is, that they did not see, when they had thus "restored" old work, that it did not look right; that, though their mouldings were identical of section with those of the thirteenth century, and though their carved foliage and figures were "accurately" (Heaven help us!) copied from casts of that period, they did not look in the least like thirteenth-century work; nay, that they could not build a plain wall at all like thirteenth-century masons. I say that,

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if they had had the due use of their eyes, they would have seen this at once, and then fallen to reason as to why it was so; in which case, they would surely soon have found out that there were abundant reasons against the possibility of imitating the ancient work: the principal one being that since that time the whole structure of society has altered, and the position of the workman changed; that the long chain of tradition which was unbroken till the end of the Middle Ages has been snapped. And if they had once had even a doubt that this was so, surely they would have held their hands, remembering the fatal risk they ran, if perchance they were wrong, of destroying that which they could never have again, the living expression of the very heart and soul of their ancestors. Unhappily they never brought their quasi-knowledge to the test of their eyesight, and therefore they have found their knowledge hopelessly insufficient to deal with the difficulties which have beset them, and the result has been that they have most seriously injured all the great cathedrals of England, and almost destroyed some; while of the parish churches, it is only here and there that one comes across one which has had only to contend against neglect and the "churchwardenism" of the last two centuries, and has not had added to the conspiracy against its life the well-meant but disastrous attacks of the restorers. Now I appeal to you with some hope as intelligent, and in this case unprejudiced, observers, to help to put an end to this folly of restoration. If the guardians of old buildings are careful of the stability of these buildings, and will take care, and great and constant care, to preserve what they have got, they may safely leave the question of restoring them to what they have never been to a period when we have at last conquered a genuine style of architecture of our own, and let that age settle the question. I have no fear of the way in which they would settle it. I have no doubt that they would look upon these buildings as sacred relics of the older days, whose tradition they had at last caught hold on,

and whose suggestions they had developed in the period of their own genuine creations. Address to Birmingham Students

Meantime it seems to me there is another way in which the restorers neglect the evidence of their eyes as to the beauty of an old building. The buildings of the Middle Ages, especially those of what we may call the Northern Gothic, are far too sturdy and rational to be injured by fair wear and tear. Often, no doubt, some subsidence of the soil, or what not, may endanger an old building; but always, if it is well looked after, the said danger can be met by the engineering skill of the day, and the building may be made absolutely sound without any tampering with its surface; or a defective stone may be replaced by a new one where it is structurally necessary; but the surface in such buildings is so far from being damaged by the action of wind and weather, that, on the contrary, it adds a beauty to it: adds a beauty to its original beauties, mind. The lapse of time will not turn a bad building into a good, any more than it will turn bad wine into good, but it will most often make a good building very much more beautiful; because it will assimilate it to the surrounding nature, until it seems at last scarcely to have been made, but rather to have grown up from the very soil, an unartificial, inevitable growth. That any man should ever have ventured to risk the vulgarizing of all this accumulated beauty, history, and romance for the sake of a piece of barren pedantry, fills me with a wonder that I have never been able to get over.

To guard our ancient buildings jealously, therefore, against brutal destruction and egotistical falsification, seems to me to be one of the prime duties of those who are trying to make people use their eyes; for if people cannot see these, they can see nothing, and they should acknowledge their defect and leave the dealing with such works to those whose eyesight is not defective.

Now I have gone over a few of the points with which it is necessary to deal, in considering how we are to get peo-

ple to see Art, and the materials of Art. Of course I do not pretend that I have exhausted even the list of subjects; still I feel sure that by the time people have begun to see the face of the earth, and the works of mankind upon it that were done spontaneously, and with a pleasure which is still obvious upon them, they will find it necessary to do their share in the production of such works, and be impelled toward creation.

And that word brings me to what I have to say more particularly to the Art-students here present; for, unless you are acting in pure error, you have, in establishing and in fostering a School of Art here, accepted the position that it is desirable that people should be taught to use their eyes, and that, when they have learned to do that, in ever so little a degree, the natural result must be an irrepressible desire to create works of art. And in the first place let me dwell upon these words: An irrepressible desire to create. I always have warned, and always shall warn, when I have the opportunity, young people against looking on the practice of the arts as a mere profession, a career to be chosen for the earning of livelihood. I am often consulted on this point, and my answer is always the same: "If you are quite sure that you have got in you the irrepressible desire, you need no test of capacity to begin with; you will yourself know that you have in you some power of creation; in that case do not hesitate, but throw yourself into it for better or worse, and take what will come. But if you do not feel that you have the capacity or desire, then, by all means, if you can, study Art as a recreation or a piece of education, but do not pledge yourself to live by it; for, if you do, you will be a burden to Art, and will, if you have the insight which a serious person ought to have, feel yourself to be in a false and ignominious position." Now, this warning is more necessary than you may think, because most men who have any character or strength of will, can, by concentration and diligence, learn the practice of a profession for which they are not really fit; and this very commonly happens in the

arts, and produces men who, as far as the arts are concerned, are mere mechanical pretenders, though not necessarily so wilfully. So, I say, make yourselves sure that you have in you the essentials of an artist before you study Art as a handicraft by which to earn your bread. But, again, if you are able to do this, and become a genuine handicraftsman, I congratulate you on your position, whatever else may happen to you, for you then belong to the only group of people in civilization which is really happy: persons whose necessary daily work is inseparable from their greatest pleasure. But, if I may sermonize you for a moment, remember that noblesse oblige: with such happy people as you are, we cannot put up with the follies and dishonesties which we forgive to less fortunate people, bishops, and prime ministers, and generals, and landowners, and great capitalists, and the like. You must be absolutely faithful to your Art, and, though I do not ask you to judge other artists severely, you must be hard with yourselves; and, though you may never be able to do your best, yet you must aim at doing so, and, I say, take yourselves, your better selves, for your judges, and not people who know nothing about Art, and whom you may easily hoodwink. Your position as modern artists makes this all the more imperative on you. To the mediæval craftsman generally, ornament was only incidental. If his ornament was not good (which by the way it almost always was), at least he was making a shoe, or a knife, or a cup, or what not, as well as ornament. But you who make nothing but ornament, please to remember that a piece of white paper, or an oak panel, is a pretty thing, and don't spoil it. Well, that is all the sermonizing. As to how you are to set to work, I can but give you a few disjointed hints as to my opinions, which kindly take for what they are worth. It is clear to me that you have amongst you those who are using their eyes well in the direction of that sympathy with characteristic landscape which I spoke of before. This is already much; a whole school can be founded on such observation and sympathy, and again, as abovesaid,

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such a school may have quite important results in teaching the general public to see. Now, I dare say you are being told that you are getting mannered; attend to that warning, though it may in some people's mouths mean nothing except that they have no eyes for the ornamental side of Art. The corrective to overmuch manner is, first, diligent study of Nature, and, secondly, intelligent study of the work of the ages of Art. The third corrective is infallible if you have it; but you cannot all have it: it is imagination. But, at least, if you have not got it, do not pretend to it; or you had better give up Art altogether. Again, you will, I know, do things which will be called hard; you must look into that, but I will tell you that a design may be very clear and precise without being hard. I remember, e.g., the early nights in Iceland, where there was no shadow, and all was so clear that you could see every cranny in the mountains ten miles off, as if you could touch them, but there was nothing hard in it all. The hardness comes, I think, from using ugly lines, wiry or edgy, or from over-shading, not from precision. Now, a word as to colour. One can only give warnings against possible faults; it is clearly impossible to teach colour by words, even ever so little of it, though it can be taught in a workshop, at least partially. Well, I should say, be rather restrained than over-luxurious in colour, or you weary the eye. Do not attempt over-refinements in colour, but be frank and simple. If you look at the pieces of colouring that most delight you in ornamental work, as, e.g., a Persian carpet, or an illuminated book of the Middle Ages, and analyse its elements, you will, if you are not used to the work, be surprised at the simplicity of it, the few tints used, the modesty of the tints, and therewithal the clearness and precision of all boundary lines. In all fine flat colouring, there are regular systems of dividing colour from colour. Above all, don't attempt iridescent blendings of colour which look like decomposition. They are about as much as possible the reverse of useful.

As to those of you who are designing figure work, I would say, Do not spare yourselves in drawing from the living

model, draped as well as undraped; in fact, draw drapery continually, for remember that the beauty of your design must largely depend on the design of the drapery. What you should aim at is to get so familiar with all this that you can at last make your design with ease, and something like certainty, without drawing from models in the first draught, though you should make studies from nature afterwards. This, no doubt, is very familiar advice to you, so I will try to finish with something which is not quite so dead a platitude, and ask you to consider it. I have always noticed, in good mediæval designs, a peculiar kind of interest and ornamental quality, which is quite lacking in most of those of the Renaissance and of modern times. And this seems to me to be caused by the planes of the figures being very near each other in the mediæval designs, and their being separated from each other by long perspectives in the later periods, which latter method produces an emptiness and lack of interest which destroy all ornamental effect. When you go up to London, get over, if you can, to Hampton Court, and you will find a good example of what I mean there. The great hall, and the solar or drawing-room are both hung with fine tapestries: those in the hall are of the Renaissance period, and fully illustrate this fault of emptiness; those in the solar are of the Gothic period, and each piece is quite stuffed with beautifully-draped figures. The hall tapestries look dull and vulgar, the solar tapestries full of interest and incident, and are the best possible ornament for the walls. The contrast is well worth noting, as both sets are fine of their kind.

Well, if I were to go on saying all I really have to say, there would be no end to it. So I will end with saying that I, an old man now, have been much encouraged with what I have seen of the enthusiasm, and aspirations toward the right road, of the Birmingham School of Art during the last few years, and I beg you to go on encouraging us of the last generation, so that the next after you may need no encouragement save what they will get from their own work, the pleasure of creating beautiful things, which is the greatest pleasure in the world.

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